

FIGHT RACISM FIGHT IMPERIALISM

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BRITISH TERROR IN IRELAND

During the month of November British terror – the official carried out by the British army and the unofficial carried out by loyalists – accelerated. British army shootings, curfews, house-raids and loyalist attacks have been covered in a blanket of silence in the cowed British media which have been concentrating their efforts in defending imperialist interests in Ireland.

WAR AGAINST APARTHEID

On 16 December 1981, Umkhonto we Sizwe – military wing of the African National Congress celebrated its 20th anniversary. It was celebrated to the thunder of 4 explosions in Pretoria where Umkhonto fighters put out the city's power station leaving parts of the capital in temporary darkness. And out of this darkness, Commissioner of apartheid Police, General Coetzee could only regurgitate a now standard imperialist recital. The bombing, he claimed, signalled only that Umkhonto was nearing the end of its resources and recruits and that it was now 'scraping the barrel'. How many times have British generals made similar remarks when speaking of the IRA!

Coetzee's remarks, designed to reassure white racists, were greeted with mild amusement and contempt at the 300 strong ANC rally in London to mark the founding of Umkhonto. Opening comments by Ruth Mompati – ANC chief representative in Britain – underlined the wide international support for the armed struggle in South Africa. She welcomed representatives from the Palestine Liberation Organisation, from the Polisario Liberation Front, from the FDR in El Salvador, from the Frontline states and from the socialist countries who she said had never failed to give support to the liberation struggle in Africa.

But the high point of the evening were two stirring speeches by representatives for the African National Congress and the South African Congress of Trade Unions. Andrew Moletsane, speaking for SACTU drew out the close connection between the black working class and the armed struggle. SACTU, he said, 'paid homage

to MK' (Umkhonto) amongst whom 'were workers who gave their lives for freedom'. SACTU had given 'its blessing to MK' as the South African working class:

'found that the liberation struggle of workers would not be achieved without recourse to the armed struggle!'

The black working class, he said, fully supported Umkhonto we Sizwe and reminded the audience that among the ANC 6 now languishing in jail awaiting death was Anthony Tsotsobe a young worker so:

'frustrated by the grinding capitalist system... that he joined MK and the political struggle to free the African working class.'

Profound applause greeted Andrew Moletsane's speech and the audience knew that with thousands of workers ready to join Umkhonto, Coetzee will no doubt be forced to eat his words.

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British army terror

12 November: British soldiers opened fire on Ian Aiken as he drove through Buncrana Road checkpoint without stopping. His car crashed and he died from his injuries. This shooting is yet another one which proves that the celebrated 'yellow card' is strictly for the consumption of liberals ready to be fooled by the most transparent lies.

25 November: Four drunken off-duty soldiers from the Royal Anglian Regiment accosted Angela D'Arcy and her friend in Enniskillen. In the best traditions of British 'peacekeeping' they demanded money. When Angela refused Private Rodney Birkett shot her dead in the street. The RUC, reformed and impartial as we know, issued a statement saying that Angela died in a 'pub brawl' and no members of the 'security forces' were involved. Birkett has since been charged with murder. We await the outcome of his trial with interest.

Curfews

16 November: The Donagh housing estate, Lisnakea, South Fermanagh was invaded in the early hours of the morning by hundreds of British soldiers, RUC and UDR. The estate was sealed off for 36 hours. Anyone entering or leaving was bodily searched. The searching, as befits the barbarian character of imperialism, included searching babies' nappies and intimate body searches of young girls. 16 year old Rita Gleeson resisted this obscenity and was promptly dragged off to Lisnakea barracks. The curfew was finally lifted at 7.30pm the following day.

19 November: From 5am to 3pm the Kashmir district of West Belfast was sealed off by British army, RUC and UDR. In this curfew free rein was given to British army house-wrecking (known as 'searches' in the bought British press). 20 homes were ransacked. The case of Mrs Mary Corrigan is typical. Her front door was broken down, holes punched in her front bedroom

ceiling, a wall ventilator ripped out, wallpaper ripped off the walls, floorboards and carpets ripped up. For working class nationalist families suffering high unemployment and poverty, this wanton destruction of hard-earned possessions is particularly vicious form of terror.

Loyalist attacks

Loyalist terror attacks began before the execution of Bradford and have continued since.

14 November: 19 year old Stephen Murphy was shot in Oldpark Avenue at 7.30pm. Two men, one with a rifle, went to Murphy's house. When Stephen opened the door he was gunned down. He was hit in the neck and stomach and died ten days later on 24 November.

15 November: 18 year old Thomas McNulty was shot dead at 2am in the Strand. Two men, on a motorbike, opened fire. He ran but was hit and fell. Then one of the assassins dismounted, calmly walked over and shot Thomas in the head at point-blank range. They drove off to loyalist Woodstock Road.

17 November: 22 year old Peadar Fagan was shot dead just after midnight in Lurgan. He was in a car with a friend. Another man was killed instantly whilst his friend was in the arm.

26 November: an 18 year old youth from Newington, North Belfast, was hit by a single shot fired from a passing car. The shot shattered the bone in his forearm.

27 November: 35 year old Sean Rice was shot whilst minding a stall at the junction of King Street and Castle Street. The passenger of a motorbike fired six shots hitting Sean in the shoulder and both legs. A black taxi driver held up the assassin's getaway by causing the motorbike to crash. One assassin got away in a loyalist taxi, the other ran into a nearby house. The RUC refused to search the house! So with the help of the 'security forces', the assassin got away.

This combined wave of British army and loyalist terror has gone unreported in the British press but it is known of in the nationalist community and only serves to strengthen their determination to destroy British rule.

YOP slave labour

Stage one of the British state's answer to last summer's Uprisings by youth has come in the form of frame-ups, imprisonment and police terror. Now Stage 2 has been unveiled. Unemployed young people are to be forced into the bogus Youth Training schemes designed not to train them but in fact to discipline and control them. 16 year olds will get £15 per week and 17 year olds £23.

If they refuse to accept this slave labour then they will be denied even the meagre pittance of social security. If they accept but then in the course of training stand up for their rights or in some other way displease the 'masters' then a bad report will dog all their future attempts to get work.

This is the capitalists' solution to unemployment. Whilst hysterically denouncing 'lack of democracy' in the socialist countries where there is full employment these capitalists impose forced labour at insult-

ingly low wages on the youth in Britain. Young people who simply want the means to a decent life – a job, housing, an end to racist police harassment – will get none of these from the capitalist system.

Yet where is the outcry from the trade union movement and Labour Party at this serious assault on young people and the working class as a whole? There is no outcry. TUC leader Len Murray's criticism of

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Hands Off Ireland!

Imperialist hands off socialist Poland!

'Our country is on the edge of the abyss. Achievements of many generations, raised from the ashes, are collapsing into ruin. State structures no longer function. New blows are struck each day at our weakened economy. Living conditions are oppressing people with growing burdens.'

With these words General Jaruzelski announced the introduction of martial law in Poland. This extreme measure had become necessary to defend the very existence of the socialist state. The RCG unreservedly defends the right of the socialist forces in Poland to take these measures.

For a whole period of time the imperialists have been actively fomenting pro-capitalist, anti-Soviet forces in Poland. Whilst hypocritically demanding that the Soviet Union 'keep out of Poland' the imperialists have for years past interfered in the political and economic affairs of Poland. They have used Poland's appalling indebtedness to the imperialist banks as a means of exerting greater and greater control over Poland's internal economic affairs. Today the expansion of industry, the building of houses, the standard of living of the Polish masses are held to ransom by the massive interest payments - \$200m dollars per month - that Poland has to pay to the parasitic, bloodsucking imperialist banks.

Not content with bankrupting the Polish economy the imperialists have actively aided the anti-Soviet opposition in Poland. The imperialists have found a willing tool for their schemes in the pro-imperialist trade union movements in Europe and the USA. They have channelled large amounts of equipment and other aid to Solidarity, the Polish trade union that has rapidly become the major instrument of counter-revolution in Poland. Organisations like the virulently right wing and racist US trade union, the AFL-CIO, set up a fund of \$200,000 for Solidarity. Other countries' unions have followed suit including the reactionary British TUC. These unions joined with the neo-fascist Franz-Josef Strauss who donated DM 1 million (nearly £250,000) to Solidarity through his front organisation, the Hans Seidel Foundation. So much for 'non-intervention' by the imperialists. When Reagan the imperialist butcher of the Vietnamese people and Carrington the smooth-tongued, imperialist defender of British torture in Ireland champion trade union rights in Poland, honest people will look closely at what they are defending.

What is Solidarity?

It is a strange trade union which argues for a programme which would lead to unemployment. Yet Solidarity, with massive Western support, has put its right behind measures which if implemented would lead to an end to full employment in Poland. A brief look at the main planks of its programme shows that Solidarity has taken a pro-capitalist direction.

An end to central planning

'Socialised concerns should be given the freedom to determine their production plans and methods...the centralised distribution of raw materials and other elements of production should be limited and eventually done away with...the concerns should be self financing...they should be evaluated not on the basis of fulfilling the plan, but on the basis of economic efficiency...The self management bodies...should have the right to exercise control over the assets of the concern, to decide on the aims of production and sales, the choice of production methods, and investment goals. They should also decide on the distribution of the profits of the enterprise.'

Capitalist competition

'...a precondition of the proper functioning of an enterprise under the new system is the demonopolisation of the market and the appearance of competing producers to a certain extent.'

Capitalist (kulak) agriculture

'...it is particularly necessary to eliminate all restrictions on the development of family farms and family owned handicraft and service shops... Full respect for the private ownership of land by individual farmers...'

The freedom to be unemployed

'The union recognises that the enterprises will have the right to make changes in their employment level as they need to. But the government authorities will still be responsible for carrying out a full

employment policy, although this policy must no longer hinder productive concerns...the self-financing of the enterprises may also result in some having to cut back or close down...'

This is a petit bourgeois programme for the restoration of a kind of 'welfare capitalism'. Central planning is to go. Workers in every firm will compete with workers in other firms. Capitalist enterprise should be allowed to compete with socialism. Private farming is to be encouraged. Firms can hire or fire workers according to free market criteria. Lenin said of such proposals in his own time:

'Any direct or indirect legalisation of the rights of ownership of the workers of any given factory or any given trade on their particular production, or of their right to weaken or impede the orders of the state authority, is a flagrant distortion of the basic principles of Soviet power and a complete rejection of socialism.' (CW Vol 42 p100)

The Solidarity programme represents just such a complete rejection of socialism. One week before martial law was declared Lech Walesa himself admitted at a meeting at Radom where leaders of Solidarity were discussing plans to overthrow the state:

'They are well aware that if we implement our programme that if we distribute the land from state farms to private peasants and create self-management committees everywhere we will be dismantling their system.'

That they intended to take steps to overthrow the socialist state is clear. Warsaw Solidarity leader Zbigniew Bujak was quoted as saying that the first action of the workers militia had to be 'aimed at liberating' the radio and television centre, establishment of a 'social council for the national economy' which would be 'something like a provisional national government', overthrowing the present government.

Indeed when Solidarity was set up the leading influences were a well known group of anti-socialist dissident intellectuals like Jacek Kuron, who wished to use the power of the Polish working class as a battering ram to destroy the Polish state and implement their own programme for the restoration of capitalism.

The Polish Communist Party (PUWP) and Solidarity

Honest Communists faced with these developments must ask how they came about. How was it possible for KOR and right-wing Solidarity leaders to use the legitimate grievances of the Polish workers for their own counter-revolutionary ends? This is a question for the Polish Communists to resolve through dialogue with the Polish people when the immediate threat to the Polish state is at an end. General Jaruzelski has already accepted that the failures, mistakes, and in some cases the personal corruption of leading Communist Party members over the past decade have contributed to the crisis and to the Communist Party's disastrous divorce from the trade union movement encompassing millions of working people. It is this divorce which has allowed bourgeois and petit bourgeois influences like KOR to masquerade as the friends of the Polish workers. The Communist Party failed to overcome this divorce by politically winning the workers so that they, together with the Communist Party, could confront the problems faced by the country. Instead, it took to borrowing massively from the imperialist banks in a vain attempt to buy itself out of the crisis.

Fidel Castro last year clearly pointed to the danger of this:

'Especially in Poland, imperialism is orchestrating a sinister act of provocation directed against the socialist camp. The success that reaction has had there is eloquent testimony to the fact that the revo-

lutionary party in power cannot deviate from Marxist-Leninist principles, neglect ideological work and divorce itself from the masses; and, when the time for rectification comes, this should not be done on the basis of concessions to the class enemy, either inside or outside the country'.

Which side are you on?

The events in Poland raise one central question - which side are you on? On the one side are the socialist states defending the gains of the working class and aiding the movements fighting imperialism throughout the world. On the other side is imperialism, intent on destroying socialism, crushing the working class and defeating liberation movements. Without significant exception the British middle class socialists have joined the Labour Party and trade union movement in taking the side of imperialism. The CPGB and the trotskyist left, SWP IMG WRP et al, have lined up in outright support of the counter-revolution in Poland and have condemned the Soviet Union and its Polish allies.

Whilst real communists put revolutionary interest higher than formal democracy, the British Communist Party calls for the release of counter-revolutionaries in Poland under the guise of supporting democratic rights. This same Communist Party has never called for the release of Irish political prisoners from British prisons. *Socialist Worker* calls on Polish workers to 'go into the streets to confront the military forces' in order to seize political power and overthrow the Polish socialist state. This from an organisation that refused to mobilise its own membership in defence of Irish hunger strikers and which has consistently condemned the revolutionary war of the IRA against British imperialism.

These organisations always defend British imperialism and reserve their most virulent attacks for the determined forces of socialism and liberation. It will be of interest to FRFI readers to know that these organisations which have refused to bring out their members on demonstrations in support of the Irish revolution, have within days taken steps to mobilise for an anti-Soviet demonstration on the events in Poland. At this demonstration, they will line up with a platform of Tories and Labour-imperialists including Sir Bernard Braine, Peter Shore (right wing Labour) Shirley Williams and Eric Heffer (well known for his refusal to support Irish hunger strikers in their struggle for freedom.)

Imperialist Hands Off Socialist Poland!

Communists in Britain reject the anti-socialist campaign of the imperialists and their Labour and left allies. British banks led by Barclays and Lloyds have claims of £1 billion on the Polish people. The RCG calls for the liquidation of all Polish debts to British banks. A movement in this country, capable of enforcing this, would make a real contribution to the freedom of the Polish people.

If Solidarity were to succeed, then Poland would be turned into a base for the counter-revolution against the whole socialist camp. Any imperialist inroads into the socialist countries would set back the struggle of the vast majority of mankind for a life free from poverty, oppression and racism. It is the Soviet Union and its allies that give financial and military support to the liberation movements fighting imperialism in Southern Africa, Central America, the Middle East and elsewhere. The RCG defends the right of the Soviet Union and the Polish Communist Party to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that Poland remains in the socialist camp.

Imperialist Hands Off Socialist Poland! Cancel all Polish debts to British banks!

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SOUTH AFRICA IN BRIEF

● Angola

South Africa continued its offensive against the People's Republic of Angola by the sabotage of Angola's only oil refinery at the end of November. In a statement attributing responsibility to white South African mercenaries, the Angolan government pointed out the importance of oil supplies for her army fighting the South African occupation of Angola's southern provinces. The sabotage also seriously hinders Angola's efforts to achieve economic independence: oil exports account for 80% of her foreign exchange earnings. The South African supported UNITA nevertheless claimed responsibility. Either way the responsibility for this attack lies with South Africa and her imperialist backers. At the time of the sabotage the leader of UNITA, Dr Savimbi, was in Washington holding official and unofficial meetings, with Chester Crocker, US Assistant Secretary of State.

● ANC military operations

Umkhonto we Sizwe, military wing of the ANC, continues its guerrilla operations. On 1 November a house manned by Defence Force Personnel was attacked and destroyed in a grenade and rocket attack. On 12 November Soviet-made limpet mines were used to blow up an electricity sub-station at Rosslyn Industrial Estate near Durban. On 3 November the Durban HQ of the South African Indian Council was bombed. Also in Durban, the Department of Internal Affairs building was the scene of the tenth bombing in that town this year. Then on 9 December in yet another audacious operation, ANC soldiers ripped apart the Cape Town offices of the Department of Co-operation and Development as well as 2 Commissioners Courts which enforce the hated pass laws.

● Prison deprivation

In April 1979 26 year old Caesarina Makhoeri took part in a hunger strike protest against the quality of the food in Kroonstad Prison. She was then placed in segregation and isolation by the prison authorities. In September 1981 she was still in isolation. In this period of 29 months she saw only one person, apart from the prison authorities: a ten minute visit from her mother in 1980. Caesarina Makhoeri has also been refused permission to study. In September this year she was being refused toiletries. The 'legal' maximum period of isolation is one month!

● Detention

The South African Minister of 'Justice' states that 157 people are under banning orders and 118 detained without trial. The South African Institute of Race Relations reports that between 156 and 200 people are detained. Both figures are underestimates as the apartheid police are not obliged to release the total figure of detainees but only to reveal whether or not a specific named person is detained.

● Failed Coup in Seychelles

On 26 November, a gang of 100 mercenaries, trained and organised in South Africa flew into the Seychelles islands in an attempt to overthrow the left-wing government of President Albert Rene. The coup failed, 50 mercenaries were captured, and another 44 hijacked an Air India plane and flew to South Africa. The apartheid regime immediately denied any knowledge or involvement in the plot. However their treatment of these racist jackals proves otherwise. Following a few days detention, 39 mercenaries (all of them were either South Africans or white refugees from independent Zimbabwe) were released without charge! The remaining 5, including the notorious imperialist savage Mad Mike Hoare, were charged only with kidnapping and were given immediate bail. Since then a senior South African intelligence officer who was captured by the Seychellois forces during the mercenary raid has emerged as the latest bit of evidence of South African adventures against the left-wing government of the Seychelles.



SOUTH AFRICA

CISKEI-CONCENTRATION CAMP

The mass deportations of millions of black people into desert concentration camps called 'homelands' and granting them 'independence' is one of apartheid's 'solutions' to the mounting revolutionary struggle in South Africa.

On 4 December, Ciskei, an arid landmass of 8,300 square kilometres became the fourth such 'homeland' to be granted 'independence'. As a result more than 2 million black South Africans lost their citizenship and when South African capitalism has no use for them they can now be 'legally' deported to Ciskei. There they will languish in poverty and starvation until called upon once again to labour for South African and other imperialist capitalists.

The British *Guardian* described Ciskei as a 'rural ghetto' and even the South African *Sunday Times* was forced to hint at this fraudulent 'independence':

'The independence that Ciskei will enjoy is more formal than it is real... It lacks virtually all the attributes of a viable economy'.

Ciskei is incapable of employing and feeding the 660,000 people who live there. Its borders were designed in such a way as to exclude the East London and Berlin industrial areas which employ the workers living in Ciskei. The South African regime also excluded 188,000 acres of farming and forest land thus leaving Ciskei with no industry and with only 2% of irrigable land. Annual per capita GDP is £6 and unemployment is over 35%. Diseases arising from starvation are rife, as are measles, TB and gastro-enteritis. Into this area the apartheid regime is already planning to expel another 662,000 black people living on white owned farms and 68,500 deemed to be illegal immigrants in 'white' urban areas.

The *Sowetan*, a newspaper widely read by black people in South Africa commented:

'...the politics of homelands...is fraudulent, out to please only a few seekers of power and their own material advantage, and...leads to misery for the majority of blacks involved'.

The 'independent' Ciskei will be a vast concentration camp for the aged, the sick, the unwanted and unemployed black people of South Africa. Its 'independent black government', consisting of a tiny group of blacks who have sold themselves to apartheid in return for material privileges, will be apartheid's instrument for controlling and supervising this concen-

tration camp. Its main function will be to provide a source of cheap black labour for British and other capitalists in South Africa. The Ciskei Manpower Development Centre is already planning to turn the area into a 'labour supermarket' of workers who will be medically and psychologically tested before being offered to employers.

All opposition to apartheid, to Ciskei 'independence' and to the organisation of slave labour will be ruthlessly repressed. Ciskei's Prime Minister Chief Lennox Leslie Wangoma Sebe and his brother General Xhandi Charles Sebe who is head of the Ciskei Intelligence Agency and one time member of BOSS boast of their hatred of the African National Congress and of their determination to destroy the



'communist inspired ANC'. So far this year over 300 people have been detained with the most serious repression directed against the South African Allied Workers Union whose staunch opposition to apartheid and Ciskei independence has won it growing influence in East London. Over 200 of its members are now in detention, 140 of whom are now standing trial for incitement. Meanwhile Thozamile Gqweta, President of the SAAWU has again been detained in East London for the fifth time—twice previously by the apartheid regime and twice by the Ciskei Intelligence Service! In addition the Ciskei government has banned all opposition organisations and its National Assembly has 36 nominated representatives to 22 elected ones giving the Sebe brothers complete control over the allocation of

jobs and land. With 4/5 of its income coming directly from Pretoria, this 'independent black government' will continue to do its master's bidding.

By granting Ciskei 'independence', the apartheid state will free itself from any responsibility to provide any expenditure for over 2 million blacks' housing, education and health, whilst continuing to rob them of the wealth they produce. Already the Dunlop factory in East London has announced that as a result of Ciskei independence black workers will lose their pensions, and black farmworkers have been given no assurance that, when forcibly removed from white owned farms, they will be allowed to take their cattle with them. By giving power to an 'independent'

black government, the apartheid state has merely shared out the job of racist repression with a tiny group of black traitors hated by the black masses.

No government in the world, including Britain, has dared recognise the fraudulent independence of apartheid concentration camps called 'homelands'. Yet the British government is by no means absolved of responsibility for a policy, which in the words of Bishop Desmond Tutu: '... resembles the Nazi's elimination of the Jews'.

Behind apartheid, enabling it to carry out genocide, stand the British Government, British banks and British companies who all thrive from the enslavement of the black masses of South Africa. The com-

munist and working class movement in Britain not only denounces the fraudulent 'independent' homelands, but points to the main cause and support – British imperialism – and declares:

**End British collaboration with apartheid!
Death to racist South Africa!
Death to British imperialism!
Victory to the ANC!**

Eddie Abrahams

TRIBUTE

On 17 November 1981, Colin Winter, for many years the Anglican Bishop-in-exile of Namibia, died in London. He was expelled from Namibia in 1972 for his militant opposition to South Africa's occupation of that country.

We well remember how, at public meetings, Bishop Winter, a SWAPO member, would outshine fellow speakers with his clear and militant anti-imperialist speeches. Wherever he was he unceasingly championed the cause of the oppressed and whilst in Britain this led him to support the struggle for Irish liberation.

In September 1980 at a rally in London he pledged his support for Irish political prisoners saying that it was plain to him that Ireland and Namibia were fundamentally the same for both nations were involved in a war of liberation. A year later, in September 1981, illness prevented him from attending a rally in London during the visit of 92 prisoners' relatives but he sent a message of support to underline his solidarity:

'The state of war in Northern Ireland is the inevitable consequence of English imperialism, English intrans-

igence, English policies and English callousness. Is it not to be expected that such an institutionalised state violence will be met with counter violence?... I open my arms in love and solidarity with you. May English troops be removed, may English sciences be spared, may English Christians be roused from indifference and that silence which is acquiescence in evil'.

His death is a great loss to the revolutionary movement and his service to the cause of freedom in Namibia and Southern Africa will be respected by forces of revolution and progress. Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! sends sympathy and solidarity to Winter's friends, relatives and comrades.

REVIEWS

To be born a nation – the liberation struggle in Namibia
Department of Information and Publicity, SWAPO of Namibia, ZED Press. £4.95.

This book is an excellent and comprehensive history of the struggle of the Namibian people.

The first section deals with the harsh realities of imperialist conquest and domination. How the African people were massacred and robbed of their lands and forced to labour in the mines and factories of the colonialist. How the economy of Namibia has been developed to the benefit of the foreign capitalist. Illustrating the wretched misery the black workers are forced to endure, this book shows how the people of Namibia are being robbed of their inheritance by imperialist plunder.

The second section is the history of resistance by the Namibian people. From the early resistance to colonial conquest in the 1890s and the war of national liberation 1904-8, through the development of the struggle to organise labour, the mass struggles against apartheid and contract labour to the building of today's national liberation movement SWAPO and their escalation to armed struggle through the military wing PLAN (People's Liberation Army of Namibia).

The book shows conclusively that Namibia's oppression is rooted in imperialist exploitation and that its freedom lies in the national liberation struggle led by SWAPO and its military wing PLAN.

**Victory to SWAPO!
Death to imperialism!**

Tony James

Divide and Rule: South Africa's Bantustans

Barbara Rogers. International Defence and Aid Fund, Revised ed (1980) pp 136. Price £2.00

There are now over 100,000 people in the prisons of South Africa. In reality the great majority of South Africa's population is imprisoned by the white racist regime—in particular the increasing number of blacks (at present 7 million) living in the concentration camps called bantustans. These are artificially constructed 'homelands' for 'black tribes'. Most black people have never lived in, nor come from, these 'homelands'. Alterations of the shape of the bantustans and forced deportation have meant forced migration for 6.3 million blacks and 7.7 million more are on the list. Although lacking clear analysis, Barbara Rogers' book proves that the bantustans are used for dumping those superfluous to capitalism and to provide a reserve army of labour for white-owned industry and farms.

There are 10 bantustans making up 13.8% of the total land of South Africa. They lack resources, industry (which is in 'white' areas) and good land. Much of the land is unsuitable for cultivation (eg 70% in KwaZulu). Frequently the best land is bought by the South African Government to create the bantustan, only to be leased back to the same white farmer. When minerals have been found the area reverts to being a part of South Africa (eg platinum found on the coast of KwaZulu). Together this means poverty, unemployment and overcrowding. Whilst in South Africa as a whole, population density is 35

per square mile, in the Transkei it is 122 square mile. Three districts of KwaZulu have an estimated 3,000 per square mile. The work which can be found within bantustans is very badly paid. In a survey of Transkei villages, 95% of the households had a cash income of less than £28 per month, (prices are comparable to those in Britain) 50% had less than £7 per month – this is in the richest country in Africa.

The Pretoria government keeps bantustans underdeveloped to ensure economic dependence. Politically and militarily Pretoria runs the bantustans through the medium of privileged black chiefs who are hated by black Africans. They co-operate with the racist regime. Their rule is enforced by South African trained police and army.

Four bantustans – Transkei, Venda, Bophuthatswana and Ciskei – are 'independent'. Acceptance of citizenship of an 'independent' bantustan, which is compulsory if Pretoria decides this is a 'homeland', means loss of South African citizenship. This happened to 6 million blacks when Transkei became independent in 1976. The recent deportation of black families (see FRFI September) from Nyanga (near Cape Town) to the Transkei, a journey of 500 miles, was 'justified' by calling these families illegal immigrants. Opposition within the bantustan to the racist rules faces barbaric laws similar to those of the Pretoria Government. Under the Transkei Public Security Act anyone propagating or disseminating views that Transkei or other parts of South Africa should form another country or part of another country will be guilty of a treasonable offence and liable to the death penalty.

Chris Fraser

Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! January 1982

ANC lawyer murdered

On 19 November the black lawyer Griffiths Mxenge was brutally murdered in the South African city of Durban by agents of the Pretoria regime. His wife reported that 'one of his ears was cut off, his head was bashed in and his whole body full of marks inflicted by a needle'. Throughout his life Mxenge served the cause of black liberation in South Africa; both as a lawyer defending those brought before the racist courts for their opposition to the apartheid system and as a political activist. In the 1960s he served three years on Robben Island for membership of the ANC. More recently he played a leading role in the Free Mandela campaign, the campaign in support of the demands of the ANC Freedom Charter, the mobilisation against the 20th anni-

versary of the racist apartheid state and the struggle to boycott the South African Indian Council.

After his murder, ANC President, Oliver Tambo said 'These acts of brutality can only serve to strengthen our determination to free ourselves. Through his martyrdom Griffiths Mxenge has set us the task to destroy the apartheid system sooner rather than later... As we lower our banners in memory of a great son of the people, an outstanding revolutionary, we renew our vows that we shall give no quarter in the noble struggle to rid our country of the murderers and tyrants that illegally rule our country and people. Farewell dear brother and comrade. Your sacrifice is not in vain'.

Chris Fraser

SCARMAN DEFENDS POLICE

Lord Scarman on the RUC 1969:

'Undoubtedly mistakes were made and certain individual officers acted wrongly on occasions. But the general case of a partisan force cooperating with Protestant mobs to attack Catholic people is devoid of substance and we reject it utterly.'

Lord Scarman on the Metropolitan Police 1981:

'The direction and policies of the Metropolitan Police are not racist... The allegation that the police are the oppressive arm of a racist state not only displays a complete ignorance of the constitutional arrangements for controlling the police: it is an insult to the senior officers of the force...'

But racial prejudice does manifest itself occasionally in the behaviour of a few officers on the streets.'

Lord Scarman's report on the Brixton Uprising has drawn praise from many quarters - William Whitelaw, the police, the Labour Party, TUC, CRE and the Communist Party's *Morning Star*. Strange bedfellows, it might be thought. Not so. All are fundamentally united in their desire to cover up the fact that the British police are and can only be a racist and repressive force of the British imperialist state. Scarman's report is another piece of ammunition for them.

The ruling class has found Scarman's report very useful in defending the police and fobbing off their liberal critics like the Labour Party, CRE. These liberal critics are worried that police violence and repression provokes counter-violence from the oppressed. They believe that police 'excesses' should be curbed so that black youth will not organise to fight them. While Scarman completely defends the police he also sings a soothing lullaby to the liberal critics. And while they snooze the police stock up on CS Gas and carry on beating, harassing and framing black youth. More victims are added to the list of people murdered by them - Shofique Meah, killed by the Handsworth 'community police' is only the latest.

Scarman unequivocally defends the police. He flatly rejects the view (and indeed calls it insulting) that the police are the oppressive arm of a racist state'. Their response to the rising of black youth was, he says, to be 'commended'. They

'stood between our society [that is Lord Scarman's society] and a total collapse of law and order.'

But he cannot afford to totally ignore the overwhelming evidence of police racism. Thus

'racial prejudice does manifest itself occasionally in the behaviour of a few officers on the streets'.

Not the police as a whole but a few 'bad apples' are responsible for the racism which black people have suffered at the hands of the police for years on end.

In the same way, Scarman denies that the state is racist:

'Institutional racism does not exist in Britain'.

How then can he explain the oppressed position of black people?

'racial disadvantage and its nasty associate racial discrimination have not yet been eliminated.'

He does not care to deal with immigration controls, passport raids and deportations, imprisonment of black people and police attacks on their organisations. No, all this is swept under a thick carpet of Scarman's raffle about 'discrimination'. No wonder this claptrap has been welcomed by the ruling class and its liberal critics. For the police, whose murderous behaviour has been exposed over recent months, it is a superb cover-up. And for the liberals,

whose credulity knows no bounds, Scarman has pleased them by recognising that racism exists and that some policemen are racists.

Only one thing disturbs Scarman's peace of mind. He recognises the existence of a threat to the society that has given him his power, wealth and prestige. That threat is the increasingly revolutionary fightback by black youth. Racial disadvantage, says Scarman, is

'a potent factor in unrest'

To ignore it is to

'put the nation [Lord Scarman's nation that is] in peril.'

Equally, he says, to ignore the 'loss of confidence' in the police among black people is to run the risk of more uprisings. That is why he recommends efforts to eliminate 'racial disadvantage'. He wishes for better housing, education, employment and social services. For more nurseries and better schools. If wishes were horses his feet would never touch ground again. Scarman cannot afford to admit that as long as capitalism exists poverty, unemployment and racism will exist. And with British imperialism in deep crisis, the ruling class will (whatever Scarman's 'wishes') continue to load ever greater burdens on to the working class and deepen the oppression of black people.

Even Scarman recognises that his wishes will not be fulfilled. Thus the question for him is how to prevent the fightback by black people against their intolerable conditions becoming a major threat. He would be quite willing to use violent repression should it prove unavoidable. But obviously he would prefer more subtle and less obviously brutal methods of control. One cynical suggestion he makes is to raise up a small section of black people:

'to secure a real stake in their community through business and the professions is in my view of great importance if future stability is to be secured.'

Let the mass of black people rot in poverty if only a small section can be bought off to act as the agents of capitalist society within the black community, there to spread lies and illusions.

On the police Scarman's proposals are of the same order. The major structures of repression must be kept intact and improved. Scarman is all in favour of stocks of CS Gas and water cannon. The SPG must be maintained. The use of stop and search operations must be continued when necessary. So it will be life as before for the black youth with harassment, beatings and frame-ups. But says Scarman let there be better training for the police in being tactful and non-racist. Let there be 'liaison' with the community. Let there be visitors allowed into police stations like the Boards of Visitors in prisons. Let there be some 'independent element' in the now totally discredited complaints procedure. What does it amount to? Simply that the



PRESS ASSOCIATION

police should better obscure their repressive role under a coating of 'liaison committees' where the police can talk to 'community leaders' while simultaneously crushing black youth on the streets. That murder shall continue in police stations but be sanctified by the same tongue-tied reactionaries who make up the Boards of Visitors in prisons.

Finally community policing is revealed by Lord Scarman in its true light. A form of police spying and control, an addition to their armoury not, as the liberals would have it, a non-repressive alternative. Scarman gives as an example of its uses police participation in the planning of housing estates. He refers to the 'planners dream' of Stockwell Park Estate built without police advice and now very difficult to police. It will be remembered that Stockwell Park Estate and its balconies were used to stone and petrol bomb the police during the Brixton Uprising.

That Lord Scarman should be portrayed by the ruling class and its press as a liberal is eloquent testimony to the poverty and spinelessness of the liberals in Britain. That the TUC, Labour Party, CRE, *Morning Star* etc should have had high hopes of this man and welcomed his outpourings is but a sign of their own loyalty to the racist British state that Scarman defends.

But oppressed peoples and anti-imperialists know Scarman well. In 1969 Scarman was asked by the then Labour Government to report on the street battles that took place in nationalist areas of the Six

Counties of Ireland. The RUC and Orange mobs mercilessly attacked these areas and finally unable to quell the unrest the Labour Government sent in the British army. Scarman produced his report in 1972. He found that the RUC was not a sectarian force. That its use of Browning machine guns, its standing-by as Orange mobs destroyed Catholic homes, its atrocities, were all somewhat 'misguided' but resulted from

'the belief that they were dealing with an armed uprising engineered by the IRA.'

The several murders committed by the RUC did not trouble Lord Scarman. Their murder of 61 year old Mr Corry was a result of 'being in a very rough situation'. The running over of one man as the RUC drove along the pavement was 'an error of judgement in difficult circumstances'. On the killing of Samuel McLarnon who looked out of his window and was shot in the head, Scarman found that the 'police were fired on first'. Even on the RUC batoning to death Mr McCloskey, Scarman found that he had a thin skull and was 'unlucky to die'.

With such work behind him the British ruling class could safely call on Lord Scarman to defend the police. He has done his job well. But let Lord Scarman not sleep too easily. Out of the events in Ireland he so successfully covered up the IRA was reborn.

Maxine Williams

COMMUNITY POLICE MURDER

Thornhill Road Police Station in Handsworth has become the centre of attention for the community policing project which has supposedly brought 'peace and understanding' between the police and the community. That is according to Superintendent Webb and the bourgeois press who are backing him in his bid to become the next MP for Handsworth.

This 'understanding' has meant continued police brutality as in the cases of Angus Williams and Glenford Reid; political frame-ups as in the case of Dave Butcher; police infiltration into and control of community projects; control exercised through the cooperation of so-called community leaders like James Hunte.

Now the 'community police' have turned to murder - and not a murmur of

protest has been heard from these so-called community leaders. The victim, Shofique Meah, aged 43, was getting ready for work when police burst into his home and accused him of stealing £20. He was taken to Thornhill Road Police Station. *Within one hour he was dead.* The authorities claim that he died of an epileptic fit. His doctors say he never suffered from epilepsy in his life and was perfectly fit at the time of his arrest. His family saw bruising and swelling around his forehead when they saw his body.

The Coroners Inquest was held in mid-November and the Coroner, in keeping with their usual cover-ups of deaths in custody, said that the bruising on Shofique's nose and head was trivial and had nothing to do with his death. Nobody familiar with the reality of 'community policing' in Birmingham will be fooled by such a blatant cover-up.

Marie Jay

HERE TO STAY HERE TO FIGHT

Caribbean House has launched a scheme - the Homeward Bound Fund - to finance West Indians wishing to return there. This scheme has received much favourable publicity from the racist media.

It is no surprise that the British ruling class and its press should promote such a scheme. It comes at a time when the deepening oppression of black people has given rise to a wave of uprisings led by black youth and drawing in sections of white youth. Desperate to prevent that struggle the state is using every means at its disposal from outright repression on the streets and in the courts to immigration laws which split black families and deport black people.

But such repression leads to further resistance. So it is clear why the ruling class should welcome the Homeward Bound Fund. Under the guise of 'helping' black people they are in fact using the conditions they have imposed in racist Britain to drive us out of the country. For there is nothing voluntary about such repatriation. Racist attacks, police brutality, unemployment and poverty add up to the reasons which drive some black people to this so-called voluntary choice.

It is no coincidence that Home Secretary William Whitelaw is a patron of Caribbean House and therefore a party to this scheme. On the one hand he sanctions police terror in Brixton and signs the deportation orders against black people whilst on the other hand he promotes this reactionary scheme to encourage black people to leave Britain. Likewise the racist newspapers publicising the scheme have consistently attacked black people and denied the existence of racism. Now suddenly they have discovered that racism does exist - but *only* to suggest that the answer is for black people to leave the country.

The scheme's spokesman, Ashton Gibson, gave the game away when he said that poverty was an easier condition to 'bear' in the West Indies than in Britain. Those who are pushing this scheme have one main concern - that black people should 'bear' their oppression rather than fight it. And especially that they should not fight it in Britain!

Let nobody be misled by Ashton Gibson and other supporters of such schemes. In Birmingham marches are organised for 'peace, love and repatriation' and behind them lie such despicable figures as Jill Knight MP. Behind the Homeward Bound scheme lie the racist Whitelaws and the rest of the ruling class who, if all else fails to crush the struggle being led by black people in Britain, would favour forced repatriation.

The answer to the racists was shouted loud and clear on the Black People's Day of Action **HERE TO STAY! HERE TO FIGHT!**

K Ace Kelly

LIVERPOOL

The case of Peter Leonard

In the early hours of 29 July Peter Leonard had stopped to watch the uprising against the police. There was a police charge and he was caught up in the panic. He turned to run but stopped as he had done nothing. This was a matter of complete indifference to the police who batoned him across the head. As he fell more policemen attacked him with boots and batons. He was taken to Bridewell. Bailed the next day he had to be rushed to hospital. His injuries were so bad that several people who saw him in court thought he had been hit by a car. The hospital found that he had a broken nose, finger and rib and extensive bruising to the head, back and legs. Marks on his back were consistent with a beating from the sort of stick carried by police inspectors and above. He could not stand and was hospitalised for 24 hours. He suffered great pain and couldn't walk for several weeks.

In Brief

Guerrilla warfare and community policing.

Whilst Chief Murderer Oxford cobbles together his plans for community policing, guerrilla warfare continues in Liverpool 8. For most of the first week of December, there were nightly battles in Falkner, whilst on the night of 30 November, yet another policeman was hospitalised as a result of an ambush in Solway Street. It is to prevent all this that Oxford has devised his proposals for having older officers patrol the area on foot, based on Hope Street. 'Community policing' is just a grand phrase for establishing a system of touts providing information through 'friendly contact'. It is of course older officers who are most experienced at getting information in this informal and apparently harmless way. There is no doubt that this will fail in Liverpool 8. Quite apart from anything else, older policemen can't run as fast when escaping from the front-line youth.

Murderers Charged with Manslaughter

In a coldly calculated political move two Liverpool policemen have been charged with the manslaughter of Davy Moore. The timing of this announcement was no accident. It came a few days before a public meeting organised by Oxford to discuss his 'community policing' proposals with community representatives. It was an obvious attempt to entice as many representatives as possible to the meeting.

So obvious that it failed. Nobody was deceived by such a public relations exercise other than those who wanted to be deceived. After all the charge is not even murder – which Oxford and the Merseyside police are guilty of – it is only manslaughter and every attempt will be made to ensure that charges are lost. And every attempt will be made to legitimise the terror tactics which resulted in Davy Moore's death, those of driving armoured vans and jeeps at people.

Despite an orchestrated campaign of press support, Oxford's meeting was a failure. Led by the Liverpool 8 Defence Committee, 10 Community organisations boycotted it.

Repression in Liverpool 8

Leroy Cooper, whose arrest sparked off the uprising, has been sentenced to Borstal.

Ken Griffin, the youth who was sexually assaulted by police following his arrest, appeared in court in mid-December. Not surprisingly he was found guilty by Magistrates and fined £100 and given a three month suspended sentence.

In court on a charge of threatening behaviour he was more fortunate. Police witnesses were so obviously lying that the Magistrate had to call an end to the trial despite his reluctance to do so. The police sent one officer into the stand, PC Roy Goulden. He claimed to have seen Peter pick up a stone, drop it and run into a blind alley where he arrested him. At no time, he said, was Peter out of his sight for more than two seconds. So how did he come by his injuries? PC Goulden didn't know – perhaps, he said, in the two seconds Peter

was out of sight. He was also questioned about the 'blind alley'. Magistrate, defence and prosecution went to the area and searched in vain for this non-existent blind alley.

The other witness offered by the police was their duty 'doctor' in the Bridewell that night. For him his Hippocratic oath counts for much less than his salary from the Merseyside police. All he had in his notes on Peter were references to bruising and a scalp wound. How, he was asked, had he missed out on the broken nose, rib and other injuries? He refused to answer. That this doctor is not only a liar but also a racist should be known. That same night in the Bridewell he examined Donna McKoy and noticing stretch marks on her back called his assistant over and said 'Look at these tribal marks here'.

Peter Leonard had to be acquitted – and he is one of the very few who have been since July. The lies of the police were just too transparent for the court to get away with rubber stamping them this time.

Robert Clough

Political trial in Leeds

On 30 November the trial of six of the eight youths facing charges relating to the July uprising in Chapeltown began at Leeds Crown Court. That it was to be a political trial was made very clear by the opening remarks of the Prosecution. It was said that during the trial there would be references to the WRP, unemployment and housing conditions in Chapeltown and the IRA. But, said the Prosecution, the cause of the 'riots' was not the concern of the trial. So while the political activities of the defendants will be used as part of the frame-up against them, the real causes of the Uprising – police brutality and racism – will go unmentioned.

Charged with making petrol bombs and other serious charges these youths will face long sentences if found guilty. And the state is determined that they will be found guilty. One of the six, Malcolm Bouch, has been framed because of his links with the WRP. At the time he was alleged by the police to be making petrol bombs he was in fact eating Sunday dinner with his father. The case against another of the six, Michael Fahy consists of Detective Sergeant Lodge's 'evidence' that Fahy is Irish and was seen on a march in Leeds in support of the hunger strikers. Amongst the questions the police asked Fahy after his arrest was 'Was it your intention to

help cause a riot because you believed it would help the cause of the IRA?'

Several of those on trial have already spent lengthy periods in custody. And this 'trial' is already showing itself to be the usual mixture of politics and fiction that the British state manufactures when it wants to lock people away.

CM

Stop Press: On 16 December Malcolm Bouch was sentenced to 4 years in prison and Michael Fahy to 2 years. One of the other youths also received a two year prison sentence and another a Borstal sentence.

youths to make an example of, the police siezed 15 people. Then with the assistance of the Director of Public Prosecutions, obtained a rare Bill of Indictment to rush the case unexamined through the Magistrates Court.

Disregard for evidence was accompanied by police intimidation of prisoners and their defence campaign. The 15 were subject to Category A status while on remand, with convoys of police escorting them to hearings. The police entered the premises of the defence campaign, using Electricity Board men as a cover, and defence campaign documents mysteriously disappeared.

The police have no interest except that of breaking the defence of black people from fascist attacks. While the murder of 13 black children in New Cross is not even admitted to be a murder, while the racist who fired the Khan's house in East London, killing Mrs Khan and her children, walks free – the state relentlessly pursues its case against the Thornton Heath 15

PB

Defend Thornton Heath 15

The state's case against the Thornton Heath 15, seven of whom are charged with murder, shows the sharp distinction between the state's treatment of black people and its lenient treatment of racist attackers.

The police and the courts openly connive in racist attacks on black people. In Thornton Heath police told fascist attackers who had used bottles and air guns to attack black people, to clear off and take their weapons with them.

But when a fightback by black youth began the police launched a wave of intimidation. Unable to identify individual



Bradford Demonstration 12 December

BRADFORD 12 April trial

In the period before their trial the state has continued to deny the Bradford 12 the right to take part in political activity including their own defence campaign. The harsh conditions of bail, curfews and regular signing of the police station continue. Many of the 12 are under constant police

veillance. In early December the 12 applied at Leeds Crown Court to have the trial switched to Bradford. But the authorities refused knowing that the support for the 12 which exists in Bradford would be an obstacle to the frame-up. The trial will begin in Leeds on 26 April. Refusing to lift the bail restrictions, 'Justice' Mustill looked at a defence campaign leaflet and said the 12 would not be allowed to take part in the campaign 'for their own protection'. In fact, the strongest campaign in defence of the 12 is their only protection and it is this that the state is trying to prevent.

Despite this, a successful demonstration of almost 2000 people was held in Bradford on 12 December. Led by the banner of the United Black Youth League, the march was headed by militant black youth. Many people joined the march along its route. FRFI supporters from London, Wales, the Midlands and North West formed a large contingent chanting 'Belfast Bradford – Free the Prisoners Now!'

The youth at the head of the march halted for several minutes outside the main police station and demonstrated their hatred of the police. Senior police present were visibly unnerved. Fascists who ventured near the march were spat on and chased away.

At the rally following the march speakers including Avtar Jouhl (IWA GB) and Anwar Ditta pledged support for the 12. Anwar Ditta told the rally 'If we win this one we can win them all'. She scath-

ingly attacked the British government for its hypocrisy. Mrs Thatcher oozed sympathy for Sakharov's daughter-in-law what about the black families split up by the British government as her own? She urged people to come out and join the struggle. Messages of support were received from many organisations including Iranian anti-imperialists. A message, accompanied by a £62 donation, pledged full support and said that the determination shown by the Irish people and by the youth in July was the determination and spirit that would defeat the Bradford 12.

BB

Bradford – Special Branch at

On the 12 December demonstration in support of the Bradford 12 an FRFI supporter was handing out leaflets about the defence campaign. Suddenly a man who identified himself as a policeman demanded the supporter's name and address. The Special Branch man said that he was taking notes because the police were considering prosecuting those handing out leaflets in contempt of court. The supporter asked the policeman's identification having noted his name – David White – told this police spy to clear off.

Now it appears that even handing out leaflets is an offence. So much for civil rights in glorious Britain.

Racist murder

On Friday 20 November Mohammed Arif, an Asian taxi-driver, was brutally murdered. Yet again a black brother has been cut down and yet again the police are covering up the fact that this vile attack was carried out by a racist thug. Mohammed Arif died from the horrific injuries he received – a slashed throat and multiple stab wounds. He leaves behind a wife and young children.

Mohammed Arif was sent by his firm, Metro Taxis, to pick up the customer who subsequently carried out this fatal attack. A middle-aged white man, Thomas Allen has been charged with the murder although the lying West Yorkshire Police say there was no racial motive for the attack. After a murder of such barbarity the police have simply said this was 'a robbery gone wrong'. It should be known that Thomas Allen has been seen distributing fascist and racist propaganda. He was once a member of the Foreign Legion and had unsuccessfully applied to be an imperialist mercenary in Angola. FRFI readers will not be surprised to learn that the man in charge of the police cover-up is Detective Superintendent Holland – well known for his racist views and architect of the Bradford 12 frame-up.

But the Asian community in Bradford is

well aware that this was a racist murder. They have shown their grief and anger in the streets. On 27 November a procession of nearly 400 people led by a 200 yard long banner of taxis marched in silent protest. The march went to the street where Mohammed Arif had lived and the mood was broken by the sobs of his father. Then the mood changed and the march surged towards the city centre shouting 'Who killed Mohammed Arif – Racists!' The police tried to stop the march going to the city but the marchers were determined and the police were back down.

On 29 November a second march took place and was equally determined. One youth shouted:

'The only way we will get justice is by taking the law into our own hands.'

Jenefer Thomas

Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! January

FIGHT RACISM IN BRIEF

Hackney family attacked

On 7 November a black family – Mrs Knight and her three daughters – were subjected to a vicious attack by Stoke Newington police.

Mrs Knight was beaten and thrown into a police van, as were her two daughters. The attack on Mrs Knight left her with injuries to the head, arms, thigh and a cut on her face that required stitching. All three were subjected to racist abuse.

Mrs Knight was fingerprinted and photographed. She was forced to return to her six year old daughter (who was left alone in her flat), she was forced to sign a police concocted statement. Mrs Knight was charged with breach of the peace and threatening behaviour, and was taken to hospital with grievous bodily harm.

A court heavy bail conditions including Jennifer Knight forbidden to live at home were imposed. The Longsight Defence Committee has held a picket of the court, and a Day of Action in protest.

Messages of support, donations and requests for information should be sent to:

Longsight Defence Campaign
10 Rectory Road, London N16 (telephone: 254 1193)

Bangladeshi Workers Strike

The 180 mainly Bangladeshi workers at the Keller Sona factory in East London have suffered disgusting conditions, little heating, a dustbin of a canteen, filthy toilets and a basic wage of £49.50 a week. In April they joined the TGWU. Management refused to even recognise the union until a member, Shoker Uddin, was burnt to death in an incinerator in the factory.

On 1 December the workers went on strike putting a 24 hour picket on the factory. To the FRFI supporters who went to the picket the workers told of the management threat to close down the factory if the strike continued.

It did not move the Keller Sona workers.

On 6 December the workers' determination had forced management to better conditions and an extra £12 on the basic wage.

Errol Madden:shameless police cover-up

Earlier this year, Errol Madden, a 19 year old black youth, was arrested and charged with stealing a toy car which he had just bought. Despite the fact that he actually had the receipt with him, police officers David Moore and Stephen Hollowell forced him to sign a confession. Due to publicity the police were eventually forced to call in the Police Complaints Board. The complaints board found that Errol was subjected to 'distinctly unprofessional behaviour' but it concluded that it was merely 'an extraordinary mistake' for him to be accused of stealing his own property! The Department of Public Prosecutions found that there was 'insufficient evidence' to bring criminal charges against any of the officers involved. Instead, they are to receive some 'strict advice' on the 'standards expected from members of the Metropolitan police'.

via Adamson

Police prepare for war

While liberals waffle on about community policing the police prepare for war.

Chief Constable of Manchester, James Anderton has admitted that police drove vans 3 abreast into the crowds in Moss Side. The same tactic killed Davy Moore in Liverpool. Anderton found it justified and efficient. Remarkably he claimed it was not meant to intimidate anyone.

The same Anderton has just issued a commendation to the thugs in blue in Manchester for their work during the Uprising. It will be pinned up in all police stations and ends with the words

'It is impossible for us not to win.'

James Jardine, spokesman for the Police Federation, who last month shocked everyone by calling for an independent complaints procedure against the police, has changed his mind. He now wants to exclude cases where possible criminal charges might arise from the independent procedure and leave them to the police to 'investigate' themselves.

Youth workers against youth

Recently five supporters of FRFI spent some evenings visiting the youth clubs in North London to sell FRFI and build support for a meeting on the Bradford 12.

At one youth club there was a lively discussion under way between young people at the club and FRFI supporters when the Youth Leader in Chief arrived. She was furious at the scene which met her eyes and decided it was not suitable for 'her' club. The young black people selling FRFI found themselves having to defend their right to speak to their brothers and sisters.

Screeching hatred and defending the police the assorted youth workers who now arrived on the scene aimed to be members of the SWP. They forbade the FRFI supporters to ever come back to 'their' club. This in spite of the fact that the young people were insisting that they wanted the discussion to continue.



Defend the Khan family

On Saturday 5 December at very short notice, one hundred Asian workers held a rally in Longsight to defend the Khan family from the threat of deportation.

The Khans are the focus of the latest attack on black people by the racist Home Office. Mr Khan came to Britain in 1972 when he was 13 years old. Now according to the Home Office he is an illegal immigrant. The Home Office case against Mrs Khan is that she 'concealed the material fact' that her husband was an illegal immigrant when she came to Britain to marry him. The fact that she had no knowledge of this so-called fact is irrelevant to the Home Office.

The Home Office has not seen it necessary to construct a case against the Khans' British-born children. So Imran, 16 months old, and Irfan, 3 months old, are to have the 'freedom' to stay in Britain as their parents are deported. For the racist British government black people have no right to family life.

But the people of Longsight are determined to stop the deportation of the Khan family. As an Asian man speaking at the rally said:

'We tell the English government that we are standing to fight together with Mr Khan.'

The rally was so successful that it formed into an impromptu march under the banner *Defend the Khan family*. The people marched through Longsight chanting: 'Deportation No Way! Khan family here to stay'.

Only a massive defence campaign will prevent the deportation of the Khans. A demonstration is planned for 19 December and a vigil for 1 January. People are urged to come to meetings of the Defence Committee every Wednesday at 6pm in Longsight Library.

**Defend the Khan family!
Smash all immigration controls!**

Malik Sivam

STOP PRESS

The document below is one of several top secret Iranian Ministry of foreign affairs memoranda obtained by Iranian anti-imperialists and now published in English by MSS (Supporters of the PMOI). They prove beyond doubt that the Khomeini regime is engaged in a systematic, widespread and well-funded campaign of surveillance and intimidation against Iranian revolutionaries abroad.

Islamic Republic of Iran
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Office of the under secretary for cultural and consular affairs

Ref No: 17/523/10/4458

Date: 12 August 1981

TOP SECRET

In the name of the Almighty
Circular to all diplomatic missions of the Islamic Republic of Iran abroad.

According to the Cabinet decision approved on 8 August 1981 the sum of one billion rials (£6.5m) will be allocated to the consulates abroad. This sum is to be distributed among Hezbollahis who are coming out of Iran under the name of students so that they disrupt meetings of counter revolutionary and anti-Islamic students.

It is clear that general guidelines will be issued in a separate letter with the appropriate budgets for each consulate.

Under secretary for cultural and consular affairs.

Javad Mansouri

SORDID SQUABBLE

The sordid squabble taking place in the Labour party over who should or should not become an MP (the 'Tatchell Affair'), over who should or should not be allowed to join (the 'Tariq Ali Affair') is not the historic battle middle class socialists suggest. It is but one more stage in the wrangle over which careerist clique should control the irredeemably reactionary Labour Party and get the best paid jobs. That it will remain racist and pro-imperialist whether controlled by the right or the left is not in doubt.

The left, gathered around Mr Benn, who are now challenging the right for control over the Labour Party, are equally racist, pro-imperialist and anti-Soviet. They have all opposed the Republican Movement, they all opposed the uprising of British youth this summer and today they stand united in supporting imperialist assaults against socialist Poland.

Mr Tatchell, a Benn fan, was described by Foot and his cohorts as a bloodcurdling Bolshevik. He is nothing of the sort. He is a typical middle class socialist – a pacifist, an anti-Soviet, in search of a Parliamentary career. Mr Tariq Ali, another Benn fan, who has just been denied entry into the Labour Party is of the same ilk. He too wishes to spend his middle age in search of a Parliamentary career. As for Militant Tendency, who are now subject to an inquiry – the only militant thing about them is their militant anti-Irish-Republicanism and militant racism.

The absurdity of the whole business is that Tatchell, Ali and Militant all deserve a place in the Labour Party – a stinking refuge for assorted careerists and opportunists both of the left and right.

EB

LEEDS 3 VICTORY

The campaign in defence of the Leeds 3, arrested while selling FRFI door-to-door, scored a significant victory in the courts. Two of the three, Bill Bolloten and Gordon Teal were successful in appealing against convictions on charges of breach of the peace, obstruction and peddling without a licence.

From the outset the defence campaign fought for the right to sell socialist literature. The police, determined to censor FRFI, did their utmost to get the convictions upheld. But their case fell apart in the face of determined questioning by defence barrister Courtney Griffiths. One prosecution witness deeply embarrassed the police when she admitted that the police – in an obvious attempt to discredit FRFI – had told her that money collected for FRFI was spent in pubs by the sellers. Police ineffectually tried to deny this, blushing as they lied.

Equally absurd was the police attempt to claim that a breach of the peace might have taken place if shoppers from the shop at the end of road where the arrests took place had ventured towards the sellers. Unfortunately for the police their two witnesses then disagreed as to whether the shop was even open.

The most potentially dangerous charge, that of peddling without a licence, was dismissed after Courtney Griffiths recounted the history of the charge which was used in the nineteenth century to harass dispossessed peasants.

This victory – a rare one – was brought about by a determined defence campaign, with thousands of leaflets, publicity and donations from the public. Local NCCL members observed the appeal as did a County Councillor. Residents of Chapeltown warmly greeted the FRFI sellers when they returned soon after the appeal to the area of the arrests to carry on making sure that the residents of Chapeltown can buy and read FRFI.

GT

YOP slave labour

continued from page one

the scheme was only that it would 'destroy essential goodwill between young people, employers and educationalists'. No doubt Len Murray feels enormous 'goodwill' to the capitalist system which has granted him his privileged position in society. The youth will not share that 'goodwill' either to the capitalists or to the labour movement which has failed to fight unemployment and accepted the massive redundancies giving rise to today's youth unemployment. Len Murray and his labour movement care not a fig for the young, the unemployed or black people. They care only for the narrow, selfish interests of a privileged layer of the working class.

The YOPs programme, precursor of the new Youth Training scheme, has already proved to be merely a form of social control with the added bonus of a potential source of cheap labour for the capitalists. In YOPs workshops safety standards are appalling and already casualty figures of youths maimed and killed are mounting. FRFI is confident that just as the youth took up the struggle for democracy on the streets last summer, so will they fight against this latest plan to enslave them through 'Youth Training' schemes. From their ranks the organisation required to fight this system – its police, courts and 'Training Schemes' will arise.

Maxine Williams

WAR AGAINST APARTHEID

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Then Seretse Choabi rose to speak for the ANC. The anniversary of Umkhonto was, he said, a day of commemoration, but it was also a day of rededication to the struggle to win the demands of the Freedom Charter – the programme of the South African revolution. The most important clause of that document, which had been drawn up by the people themselves, was that which stated:

'The wealth of our country, the heritage of all South Africans, shall be restored to the people.'

It was for this end that thousands of youth had joined Umkhonto we Sizwe. The people did not want war and violence. But they had been left no choice by the violence and war of the apartheid regime. As a result Umkhonto had now gained the support of the overwhelming majority of black people. Mothers now chided their naughty children with the words 'Wait until Umkhonto arrive, they'll see to you', because they see MK as the disciplined representatives of the people. In a speech punctuated by enthusiastic applause, Seretse Choabi placed the ANC's and Umkhonto's struggle in its international anti-imperialist context:

'The real enemy of our people are not the white settlers in South Africa. No. The real enemy is here in London. The real enemy is in New York. The white settlers in South Africa are only the caretakers for imperialist interests in South Africa.'

At this point the hall burst into tumultuous applause. Other speakers at the rally included a representative of the ANC Youth Section, Pragassan Naicker and Bob Hughes MP, for the AAM, in addition to which were solidarity messages from many organisations including of course Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!

The rally ended with the ANC choir singing and reciting Umkhonto we Sizwe's history and its escalating military effectiveness. The entire evening confirmed that the ANC and Umkhonto we Sizwe founded on the mass resistance of black people in South Africa was part of the international anti-imperialist struggle. Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! In its statement of solidarity to the rally wrote:

'The audacious and devastating blows delivered by Umkhonto we Sizwe have struck fear into the apartheid regime and its main prop British imperialism. Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! hails the freedom fighters of Umkhonto we Sizwe and is fully confident that the combined might of the ANC and its army Umkhonto we Sizwe will topple and destroy apartheid.'

**Death to Racist South Africa!
Victory to the ANC and the people's
army, Umkhonto we Sizwe!**

Eddie Abrahams

COMMUNIST TRADITION ON IRELAND PART NINE REVOLUTIONARY WAR

The demands of the nationalist minority for basic democratic rights could not be satisfied without destroying the very foundation of the loyalist state. The statelet was unreformable. The attempt to buy off the nationalist rebellion with cosmetic reforms could not succeed. As nationalist resistance refused to subside, the intervention of British imperialism in the Six Counties more and more assumed the character of open warfare against the nationalist minority. What for the nationalist minority began as a struggle to reform the Six Counties was now to turn into a revolutionary war to smash the loyalist state, end Partition and drive British imperialism out of Ireland. As British imperialism increasingly turned to institutionalised terror to break the resistance of the nationalist minority, so that minority gave greater and greater support to the army that defended it – the Provisional IRA.

Many incidents over the next six months were to confirm this trend. On 31 July 1970, in New Lodge Road Belfast, Danny O'Hagan was shot dead. Local people insisted that he was unarmed after the British army had tried to justify the shooting by saying a petrol bomb had been found on the ground by his side. All too often the nationalist minority were to hear similar British army lies to cover up cold-blooded murder.

In this period the British army made regular use of the Criminal Justice Act introduced in July 1970. This Act gave mandatory six months prison sentences for offences associated with rioting, including 'behaviour likely to cause a breach of the peace'. One of its first victims was Frank Gogarty, a former chairman of the Civil Rights Association. He was arrested when tape-recording sounds of a disturbance taking place on 1 August 1970 in Belfast. Stopped by an army patrol, he was thrown against a wall, searched, kicked, sworn at and thrown into a jeep. His offence was to shout 'Stop kicking me, you British bastard'. For that, he got a six months sentence in Crumlin Road Gaol. Another nationalist, a Belfast docker, John Benson, got six months for writing a slogan 'No tea here' on the wall of his street. Between August and December 1970 a stream of nationalist youth involved in skirmishes with the army got the mandatory six months sentence under the Criminal Justice Act, many on the perjured evidence of British troops.

With the British army stepping up its attacks and harassment of the nationalist minority, anti-Unionist politicians soon began to realise that support was rapidly slipping away from them and their programme of reform through the Stormont parliament. In an attempt to contain this development, six anti-Unionist MPs came together on 21 August 1970 to form a new party, the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP). The SDLP supported the eventual reunification of Ireland but argued that it could not be achieved by violent means. The names of the founding members of the SDLP read like a roll call of those who for the next 12 years were to spend most of their energy attempting to divert nationalist support away from the Provisional IRA – Gerry Fitt, Paddy Devlin, Austin Currie, John Hume, Ivan Cooper and Paddy O'Hanlon. This party, the voice of the Catholic middle class in the Six Counties, was supported by the 26 Counties government and financed by Southern Irish businessmen. The Dublin government not only supported this development but shared the SDLP's hatred for the Provisional IRA. By the end of 1970, the Dublin government had already rounded up and gaoled many Republicans. In December 1970, Lynch, after press rumours of plots to kidnap Dublin government ministers, even threatened to re-introduce internment without trial. This clearly would have given great encouragement to both the SDLP and the Loyalists in the Six Counties.

The SDLP, however, did not speak for the nationalist working class. Increasingly, the Provisional IRA

did, and they were rapidly recruiting the nationalist youth to their ranks. Small scale sabotage operations, striking at communications and power supplies, and retaliatory actions against British troops by the Provisional IRA built up towards the end of 1970.

In the Ballymurphy area of Belfast, where British troops were permanently stationed, skirmishes between the nationalist youth and the British army were frequent occurrences. On 11 January 1971 a major confrontation broke out.

Ballymurphy is a strong nationalist area, where the Provisionals were in the process of training hundreds of new recruits. The last thing they wanted, at this stage, was a major confrontation with the British army. The activities of the youth were, however, inviting a large scale occupation of the area by British troops. And the Provisional IRA took steps to cool down the situation. They had almost succeeded in doing this when, on 14 January, 700 troops invaded the area to carry out a house-to-house search of the Ballymurphy estate.

The situation immediately blew up again. Guns, petrol bombs and sulphuric acid were used by residents on the estate to resist the invasion of their area. One soldier was wounded. Republicans warned the army to withdraw if the situation was not to reach a point of no return. It took another two days before the Provisional IRA was able to end the confrontation and bring the situation under its control.

During the Ballymurphy confrontation an approach was made by the British army to the Belfast Brigade of the Provisional IRA. Contact had been made on a number of occasions before the latest events blew up. A meeting took place, with the consent of the Provisional leadership, during which the British army representatives agreed that there would be no activity by their own forces or the RUC in certain areas of Belfast. Control of community peace in those areas was to be left to the IRA.

Despite the fact that the British forces could not be trusted for very long, this agreement had the merit of not forcing the Provisional IRA into a premature confrontation with the British army. It also meant that nationalist areas were seen to be policed successfully by the IRA. Republican courts were set up and in many areas petty crime was significantly reduced. The Provisional IRA was beginning to emerge as a Peoples Army.

The war begins

After the Ballymurphy events, pressure on Chichester-Clark from the Loyalist side began to build up. Already in August 1970 Paisley and Craig had called for the re-arming of the RUC, the re-introduction of the B-Specials and internment. And at the end of November the influential Belfast County Grand Orange Lodge passed a motion of no confidence in the government. On 18 January 1971 Chichester-Clark saw Maudling and demanded more troops, more arrests



and a military offensive against the IRA. He got a declaration from Maudling, that the army 'may now take the offensive' against the IRA. On 25 January 170 delegates of the Ulster Unionist Council, the Unionist party's main body, not satisfied with the declaration, called on Chichester-Clark to resign. On 27 January Craig announced in Stormont that two RUC men had been surrounded by a nationalist crowd in the Clonard area and had been told by members of the Provisional IRA to leave if they valued their lives. They were rescued by British troops who, after escorting them out of the area, advised them to stay out. This, according to Craig, was proof of British army complicity in 'No-go' areas. Pressure was now building up for the British army to act.

On 3 February 1971, on the orders of General Farrar-Hockley, a force of the Second Royal Anglians cordoned off and searched the Ardoyne and Clonard areas. Crowds gathered and fights broke out with the troops. At lunchtime that day, in the Clonard area, the predominantly loyalist workers from the nearby Mackie's engineering works came out onto the streets and began to abuse and jeer at the nationalist crowds, throwing ball-bearings and other missiles at them. The army and the RUC deliberately turned their backs on the loyalist attackers and confronted the nationalist crowds. After the Mackie's workers had gone back to work, the army decided to clear them off the streets by roaming up and down the streets in their jeeps. At least two people were knocked down and injured. Two nights of the fiercest battles the British army had faced in Belfast followed. Eight soldiers were wounded by gun-fire and one by a gelignite bomb.

On 5 February Farrar-Hockley went on television and said that the area had been searched because of evidence that 'it harbours members of the IRA Provisionals'. He proceeded to name five men who he claimed were members of the Provisional IRA. He failed to mention the fact that these were the men with whom the British army had been having talks.

There were no more talks. An agreement had been broken, and the Provisionals had publicly stated that further repression against nationalist areas would be met by force. From defence of nationalist areas and limited sabotage operations, the Provisional IRA moved onto the offensive – into a more determined phase of retaliation.

On 6 February 1971 a British army patrol was ambushed in the New Lodge Road in Belfast. Gunner Robert Curtis was shot dead and four other soldiers were wounded, one who later died. This was the first time in almost fifty years that a British soldier had been killed in action by the IRA.

That same night, in the Old Park area, UVF snipers

began firing from a loyalist street into a nationalist street. Residents asked British troops to take some action against the sniping. They refused. During this attack on a nationalist area Jim Saunders, a company officer of the Third Battalion IRA, was killed. When the British army did become involved was to shoot dead an unarmed man, Barney Wren, member of Sinn Féin.

Next day, Chichester-Clark went on television and announced that 'Northern Ireland is at war with the Irish Republican Army Provisionals'.

On 9 February the funerals of the two Republicans killed took place. After the traditional volley had been fired over Jim Saunders' coffin and a guard of honour formed round the hearse, British troops tried to enter the street and interfere. Hundreds of furious people surrounded them and drove them out of the area. The funeral of Barney Watt was attacked by Loyalists, the tricolour draping the coffin was seized, and funeral processions of both men were followed by immense crowds.

Almost every day now the British army and the RUC cordoned off and searched nationalist areas, harassing and beating up the residents. These actions also had to face sectarian attacks from Loyalists. The nationalist minority replied with stones and bombs, and the IRA with bombs and guns. So the most blatantly corrupt judicial decisions took place in the courts in this period. When Republican supporters picketed courts, they were arrested and given mandatory gaol sentences. Loyalist counter-demonstrators were left alone. A loyalist dealer in illegal goods got a suspended sentence whereas a nationalist labourer, Joseph Downey, was gaoled for a year for shouting 'You shower of bastards, up the IRA'. An Orange parade passed by.

On 27 February two RUC men were shot dead in savage clashes between nationalist crowds and police and army in the Ardoyne. On 10 March Scottish soldiers were found dead in a ditch under unexplained circumstances. Both the Provisional IRA and the Official IRA denied having any responsibility. Loyalist pressure on Chichester-Clark increased. He demanded more troops, greater repression and more troops permanently stationed in nationalist areas. The British government could not meet his requirements and on 20 March he resigned.

On 23 March 1971 Brian Faulkner was elected leader of the Unionist Party. Faulkner had been Minister of Home Affairs during the IRA's 1956-62 Border Campaign. He believed internment was a major factor in bringing about the IRA's defeat. He immediately took steps to force Westminster to agree

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The army was sceptical at this stage, but the Provisionals would unite the nationalist movement. Nevertheless, in the army intelligence and RUC Special Branch, as Faulkner and the British government were preparing for internment, the Official IRA was carrying out a series of criminal attacks, including torture against Provisional IRA personnel. The British army kept retaliation to a minimum and took about a truce. Even after the truce the British army kept down Tom Cahill, a Provisional IRA member. The Officials are the same people who, in the guise of Sinn Féin, The Workers' Party, etc., present themselves as 'democrats' and conduct pro-imperialist propaganda about so-called 'atrocities'.

The Provisional IRA began a bombing campaign in 1971. The aim was to bring down the Stormont government. The immediate object of the campaign was to keep pressures off the nationalist movement by sabotaging the economy by sabotage operations against government and commercial property. The British taxpayer picking up the bill for the IRA. In April, 37 major explosions took place, and June - 50 operations.

The British army propaganda apparatus attempted to make the IRA operations were of a sectarian nature directed against civilians. And there were reports of overpaid hack journalists, working for the British, pro-Unionist media, prepared to spread propaganda. The IRA, in fact, always gave out bombs so that civilians were not killed from the area. The British army and the IRA, on certain occasions, failed to pass on information to sustain their anti-IRA propaganda, and civilians have been killed and injured.

Faulkner tried to buy off middle class nationalists by making a gesture to the SDLP, but this might tie them more closely to the British government and begin to take support away from the Provisionals. He offered the SDLP the chairmanship of the three new committees to be set up to review government policies. At the same time, the IRA followed more and more 'stick' tactics in the nationalist communities, which the Provisionals and wanted an end to continued unabated. Faulkner had on 25 May, that the troops could shoot anyone acting suspiciously.

In Derry, the nationalist youth and the British army were involved in serious clashes for days. The British army used CS gas, batons, truncheons and rifle butts to break up the nationalist youth. They eventually killed two. Two unemployed Derry men, John Hume and Desmond Beattie were shot dead. The British army claimed that they were armed and that Beattie had thrown a bomb. They could not find evidence to substantiate this. Forensic evidence showed that Beattie had had no contact with the British army. Local people said that Cusack was going to be shot from the danger zone when he was

shot. Shootings, immense crowds attended a funeral for John Hume and young people literally lined up to join the IRA. John Hume knew he had to lose all support in the area for the IRA. A press conference in Derry with other nationalists, the SDLP (Fitt, however, refused to attend that, unless an 'impartial' inquiry into the killings of Cusack and Beattie was set up. In the days, he and other SDLP members were in Stormont. No inquiry was granted, in the end the SDLP had no alternative but to join the IRA. On 15 July. Now the 'carrot' that was offered in June was no use - the IRA had no position to bite.

The IRA stepped up their campaign after the deaths of Cusack and Beattie. There were 91 deaths in Derry alone 70 troops were killed with gunshot wounds. Two soldiers were killed in Belfast and elsewhere many more were injured and wounded. On 17 July an IRA member took over the *Daily Mirror* plant and blew it up. Damage was estimated at £10 million. The British government was said to have spent £10 million.

Faulkner informed Heath that intern-

ment of Republicans and their supporters was now necessary. The army began to get prepared.

Internment without trial

The aim of internment was two-fold. It was firstly to destroy the nationalist resistance to the loyalist state by removing committed Republicans and their supporters from the struggle on the streets. And secondly, it was to terrorize the nationalist minority to such a degree that it would no longer be prepared to support the IRA.

Internment required adequate information and intelligence. On 23 July the army carried out a series of dawn raids on Republican homes in the Six Counties using 1,800 troops plus RUC men. The aim was to gather information and to serve as a dry run for internment day which was set for 10 August. It is claimed by the *Sunday Times* that a list of names was then drawn up. It included no more than 120-130 said to be members or officers of either wing of the IRA, and a further 300-500 regarded by the police as 'IRA sympathisers'. There were also 150 or so names of older Republicans who had been interned before - one of them picked up during internment was 77, blind and had been jailed in 1929. Finally, there was a small group of left-wing socialists and NICRA activists who were included because, in Faulkner's words, 'they would have called meetings to protest against internment'.

On 7 August a soldier opened fire on a van in Springfield Road killing the driver, Harry Thornton, a building worker. The army, as usual, claimed that shots had been fired at them - this 'explanation' was later changed to a soldier 'mistakenly' thinking he had been fired on when an old van backfired. A passenger in the van, Arthur Murphy, was dragged from it, assaulted by the soldiers, taken into Springfield Road RUC Station and savagely beaten up. He was reluctantly released six hours later, after a great deal of pressure and argument from local people. His face was a mass of bruises. Local people testify that when soldiers gathered round the van some were shouting gleefully 'we got one, we got one'. The anger of the people soon led to major confrontations with the army. It was at this stage that the British army decided to bring internment forward by 24 hours.

At about 4 am on 9 August 1971 the internment swoops began. By the evening 342 men from all over the Six Counties had been dragged out of their beds, arrested and distributed to three holding centres. They were detained without charge or trial under Section 12 of the Special Powers Act. The whole operation was directed at the nationalist minority. Not a single Loyalist was arrested. Very few members of the Provisional IRA - 56 in all according to a Provisional IRA statement - were taken in and none from their leadership. The Provisionals had been warned by their own intelligence officers that internment was imminent. Volunteers had been told to stay away from home. Mac Stiofain says that he was able, by the use of elementary security procedures, to contact every local leader in the Six Counties before noon of the first day of internment. There can be little doubt that the vast majority of those interned had no connections with either wing of the IRA.

Of the 342 picked up, 116 were released within 48 hours and nearly all the others were taken to Crumlin Road prison or to HMS Maidstone, a prison ship moored in Belfast dock. Soon, news of systematic sadistic brutality in the interrogation of internees began to surface. Arrests had been conducted with considerable force, houses were damaged and relatives of the interned had insults and obscenities hurled at them by the arresting soldiers. Most of the detainees were subjected to one or more forms of physical and psychological brutality over a period of sleeplessness and enforced hunger. Almost everyone taken in had been beaten up. Men had been blindfolded and terrorized by being thrown out of a moving helicopter which they were told was high in the air but which was, in fact, only a few feet off the ground. Many men had been made to run the gauntlet barefoot between lines of troops with batons across an obstacle course with stumps of trees, sharp stones, broken glass and tacks. Others were forced to do exhausting exercises for hours on end. All were continually abused and made to feel that the British army were their absolute masters and had to be obeyed no matter what 'illogical' commands were given.

As news of the internment raids spread, and later of the brutality of the arrests and interrogation, the nationalist people rose up in outright defiance against the British army. In Derry, on 9 August, the people reacted with such fury that the army was prevented from completing its operation. Obstructive behaviour, from standing in a crowd and refusing to allow soldiers to pass to petrol bomb attacks on army

vehicles, took place everywhere. The IRA took on the British army in battles which in some places lasted over several days. In Belfast gunfights were raging in the Falls Road, the Markets, Ardoyne, Andersonstown and the New Lodge Road. The fiercest battle took place around the Ballymurphy estate involving paratroopers sandbagged into the nearby Henry Taggart Hall. Three civilians and a Catholic priest, who was giving last rites to one of the victims, were killed. Six people were wounded and an 11-year-old boy was castrated by a high velocity bullet fired by one of the soldiers.

Co-operation between the people and the IRA was increasingly close especially on the big estates in Belfast. Crowds would draw troops towards them and then scatter leaving the British army as open targets for the IRA.

Believing the claims of the British army to have arrested a large proportion of the membership of the IRA, loyalist mobs used the opportunity to 'help the army' to put down the resistance in the nationalist areas. Loyalist snipers opened fire in the Ardoyne. Armed UVF members came out on to the streets. They were confronted and driven back by organised IRA units of quite unexpected strength. Whole streets were soon on fire with both Protestants and Catholics leaving their homes. Over 7,000 refugees were reported to have arrived in army camps set up in the 26 Counties. The death toll for 9 August was two British soldiers and ten civilians, seven of them Catholics. After four days, there were 22 dead, 19 of them civilians.

Claims by Faulkner, Maudling and the British army that internment had been a success and a high proportion of the IRA leadership had been arrested were soon made to look foolish. On the very day, 13 August, the British army claimed to have inflicted a major defeat on the IRA, killing between 20 and 30 gunmen, Joe Cahill, leader of the Provisional IRA in Belfast, addressed an international press conference in a school behind the barricades in Ballymurphy. He announced that their organisation was intact, that they had lost only two men killed in action and had not been badly affected by internment.

During August, there were over 100 bomb explosions throughout the Six Counties, many of them massive, as the Provisionals stepped up their offensive. In Derry, the Creggan and Bogside were effectively sealed off, protected by IRA manned barricades and beyond the reach of not just the RUC but also the British army. Free Derry was a secure base to launch guerrilla operations. The same was largely true for many nationalist areas in Belfast.

The mass of the nationalist population now joined those in the working class nationalist estates who had already started a rent and rates strike in protest against internment. Soon even government figures showed there were 26,000 families participating in the strike. By October it was costing the government in the region of £500,000. On 16 August 8,000 workers took part in a one-day protest in Derry. On 19 August, after a demonstration in Derry had been broken up by the army with water cannon and rubber bullets and John Hume and Ivan Cooper had been arrested, 30 prominent Catholics in Derry announced their resignations from positions on public bodies. On 22 August 130 councillors withdrew from local councils. Internment was now forcing even the Catholic middle class into opposition to the state. The nationalist minority had now united around one of the key Provisional IRA demands - to destroy the loyalist state.

The anger of the nationalist minority intensified when news began to filter out about a number of internees (there were 12), who had been secretly moved from the internment holding centres to an unknown destination (in fact, the Palace Barracks, Holywood - a few miles from Belfast) and held there for over seven days. There they were subjected to sophisticated psychological torture. They became 'guinea-pigs' to test out 'sensory deprivation' techniques. The 12 internees had black hoods placed on their heads throughout the seven days. They were stripped of their clothes and given ill-fitting boiler suits to wear. They had no idea where they were. Some had been told they were in England - and they were kept in total isolation. They were forced to stand spreadeagled against the wall, supported only by their fingertips, until they collapsed. They were then revived and put back. This went on, in some cases, for 2 or 3 days. They were severely beaten. During the seven days, they were on a diet of dry bread and water - some said they went without water for days. They were prevented from sleeping and were subjected to a 'noise-machine' in the large cold room in which they were held, which bombarded the brain with monotonous sounds of a certain pitch. An ordinary tape recorder, out of sight, added weird cries, screams and other demented sound effects.



Finally, they were regularly interrogated and then returned to the room.

The hood, the noise machine, standing at the wall for prolonged periods, sleep and food deprivation and the beatings were 'sensory deprivation' techniques - a combined torture to disorientate the mind and facilitate interrogation in depth. Pat Shivers relates part of his terrifying experience:

'Bag still over head... Taken into room. Noise like compressed-air engine in room. Very loud, deafening... Hands put against wall. Legs spread apart. Head pulled back by bag and backside pushed in. Stayed there for about four hours. Could no longer hold up arms. Fell down. Arms put up again. Hands hammered until circulation restored. This happened for twelve or fourteen hours until I eventually collapsed... Slapped back up again. This must have gone on for two or three days; I lost track of time. No sleep. No food. Knew I had gone unconscious several times, but did not know for how long. One time I thought, or imagined, I had died.'

However, given the degree of disorientation involved any 'confessions' forced out of anyone undergoing these techniques were just as likely to be false as true. No doubt, the sadistic criminals directing this torture were not terribly concerned. Their aim could only have been to strike terror into the nationalist minority as the news of the treatment of the internees gradually became known. In fact it had the opposite effect and intensified the determination of the nationalist minority to destroy the loyalist state. The Provisional IRA, by this time, had a waiting list of recruits.

As news of the brutality of the internment operations during the first 48 hours began to appear in Irish newspapers, pressure built up on the British government to hold an official inquiry. Labour MPs demanded a recall of Parliament. The government conceded an inquiry to be chaired by Sir Edmund Compton, a government hack who had served as 'ombudsman' for the Unionist government. It was to sit in secret and investigate allegations of 'physical brutality' during the first 48 hours of the internment operation. Specifically excluded was all mention of mental cruelty. 340 of the detainees refused to have anything to do with the inquiry, recognising that only a whitewash was to be expected from a secret British inquiry into British behaviour.

When the inquiry was nearly complete, the *Sunday Times* published information concerning the treatment of the 'guinea-pigs' and the reports of torture using 'sensory deprivation' techniques. This information had been in the hands of the press for some weeks. The techniques were, in fact, still being used on two further men while the committee of inquiry carried out its work. Compton was forced to broaden the inquiry to include some of the new reports.

The Compton Report was published on 17 November 1971. It was not only a whitewash but was clearly designed to hide the fact that psychological torture of an experimental kind had taken place. So the forcible exercises inflicted on the men 'were devised to counteract the cold'. Requiring detainees to stand with their arms against the wall 'provides security for detainees and guards against physical violence'. The hooding, it seems, was designed for the same purpose although it added that it 'can also in the case of some detainees, increase their sense of isolation and so be helpful to the interrogator thereafter.' The noise was a 'security measure' to prevent men overhearing each other or being overheard etc. Finally, while recognising that ill-treatment of some of the internees had taken place, Compton

called for a dossier to be built up 'of the men and women who are a menace to this country' and said if politicians failed them 'it may be our job to educate the enemy'. Thousands marched in formation wearing paramilitary uniforms. Craig threatened to form a 'Provisional government' if an initiative expected to be announced by the British government wasn't satisfactory.

On 24 March 1972 Heath announced the suspension of Stormont for one year. The British government would take over direct rule of the Six Counties. A British Secretary of State with Cabinet powers would be installed in Belfast – it was to be William Whitelaw. Stormont was destroyed. No-one could have any doubt that the Provisional IRA's military struggle had brought it down.

The Loyalists organised protests and strike-action, but they soon fizzled out. There were, in fact, no serious clashes with the British army and certainly no 'Provisional government'.

The IRA had not fought to bring Stormont down in order to have it replaced by direct rule imposed by Westminster. The Provisionals announced that their military campaign would continue until their demands had been met. The Official IRA also said it would continue. However, the SDLP, the Catholic Church, the Dublin government saw things in quite a different light. They welcomed direct rule and called for all IRA military operations to cease. British imperialism now had some room for manoeuvre. It would do all it could to prise open the cracks which the abolition of Stormont had created in the unity of the nationalist community.

The Irish revolution and the British

The Labour Party, strongly backed by the organised trade union movement, had begun the assault on the Irish revolution as it entered its latest phase. When the American trade union movement was about to boycott trade with Britain in protest against the Bloody Sunday murders, it was Vic Feather, General Secretary of the TUC, who persuaded them to call it off. He was subsequently thanked by the Prime Minister, Edward Heath. Given this background of a bankrupt pro-imperialist Labour and trade union movement in Britain, a great deal of responsibility for building a movement in solidarity with the Irish revolution had to fall on those organisations which considered themselves part of the revolutionary, socialist left. British communists and socialists were faced with a major test of their revolutionary credentials.

Before we go on to examine their response to the Irish war in the period 1969-72, it is necessary to say something more about certain individuals and groups on the Irish socialist left. We do this for one reason only. On many occasions the British left groups justified essentially backward and reactionary positions by reference to what Irish socialists were doing and doing. McCann, Farrell, Bernadette Devlin and other Irish socialists regularly write for British left publications and their views are often used directly or indirectly to attack the organisation leading the Irish revolution – the Provisional IRA.

Irish socialists, mainly drawn from the educated ranks of Catholics who had benefited from the wealth of the welfare state during the post-war period, have had very little influence on the direction of the Irish revolution. Certain individuals and groups, such as Peoples Democracy, did play a role in the Civil Rights campaign. However, once the struggle turned into a revolutionary war against British imperialism, once the main support for the struggle came from the nationalist working class, they became irrelevant. Essentially, they could not meet the challenge and sacrifices demanded by a revolutionary war against the loyalist state and British imperialism. McCann, in his book *War and an Irish Town*, admits this. In the Civil Rights Movement, one issue united them all – the need to reform the loyalist state.

Partition was irrelevant...we were not out to destroy the state but to achieve change within it – the extent of the change desired varying according to our different tendencies'.

Central to this position was the belief that British imperialism could play a progressive role in Ireland by forcing the Unionist government to introduce reforms. But the loyalist state could not be reformed; it had to be destroyed. And it was not the 'socialists' or the working class youth in the nationalist areas who followed the logic of those posters in their

windows depicting a clenched fist saying 'Never Again!'. In McCann's words:

'Never again were mobs, whether in uniform or not, going to be allowed to rampage through our streets shooting or petrol-bombing. The logic of that demanded a physical campaign against the state'.

The 'socialists' tried to organise 'the unemployed youth of areas like the Bogside' – the force that was driving the Civil Rights Movement into inevitable confrontation with the state. But they offered the youth nothing but abstract formulas, programmes and organisations for fighting 'imperialism'. The imperialists were, however, down at the street corner and the youth kept asking 'when the guns were going to be handed out'. They instinctively grasped that the state had to be smashed. They were not against organisation as such but demanded a relevant one. They turned to the only organisation that represented their class interests – the Provisional IRA.

'When raging bitterness swamped the ghettos and carried partition onto the centre of the political stage, no support flowed over into the socialist camp...The Provisionals are the inrush which filled the vacuum left by the absence of a socialist option'.

McCann's explanation is incomplete and, therefore, wrong. There is no socialist option separate from the national liberation struggle to drive British imperialism out of Ireland and separate from the revolutionary war to bring this about. What McCann and his friends were looking for was the non-existent middle course, a radical reformist option between the middle class orientated Civil Rights Movement for reforms, which failed, and the political confrontation with Partition and British imperialism, which, given the nature of imperialism, necessarily required a turn to armed struggle.

The position of the Irish socialists on every major political question stemmed from their class position, which expressed itself in a belief that British imperialism could play a progressive role in Ireland. And this is their real point of contact with the British middle-class socialist left.

Our Irish 'socialists', the CPGB, SWP, IMG together with most of the British left all agree on one essential thing. British imperialism has an 'economic' interest in reuniting Ireland and this goal is put in danger by the intransigence of the sectarian bigots who run the loyalist state. So, for example, *Socialist Worker* could argue

'Britain has more money invested in the South than in the North...The Ulster police state is an embarrassment and an obstacle to (the) ultimate goal: a united capitalist Ireland subjected as a whole to the domination of British capital in the context of the Common Market'. (*Socialist Worker* 18 September 1969)

Why the partition of Ireland, which was carried out precisely to preserve Britain's economic interests in Ireland and to divide the Irish working class (surely an important political consideration), should now be a barrier to imperialist exploitation of the 'whole of Ireland' is never actually explained.

The logic of this so-called 'socialist' position is to support British imperialist intervention in the Six Counties. So Bernadette Devlin sent a telegram to Harold Wilson on 5 August 1969 calling on the British government to take over housing and police. The CPGB called for decisive intervention from London – it called on British imperialism to reform the loyalist police state! When the troops were sent in, it continued with this line (*Morning Star* 4 August & 15 August 1969). This was 'socialist' colonial policy all over again (see FRFI 8). The Militant Tendency, as always fully behind Labour-imperialist policy, supported the introduction of the troops under the guise of concern lest there be a bloodbath.

'A slaughter would have followed in comparison with which the blood-letting in Belfast would have paled into insignificance if the Labour Government had not intervened with British troops'. (*Militant* September 1969)

Finally, *Socialist Worker* showed the same deep concern urging the nationalist minority to accept the troops

'Because the troops do not have the ingrained hatreds of the RUC and Specials, they will not behave with the same viciousness...'

The breathing space provided by the presence of British troops is short but vital. Those who call for the immediate withdrawal of troops before the men behind the barricades can defend themselves are inviting a pogrom which will hit first and hardest at

socialists...

To say that the immediate enemy in Ulster is the British troops is incorrect... (*Socialist Worker* 21 August, 11 September, 18 September 1969).

This fundamental belief that the SWP has in a progressive side to imperialism was confirmed when the demand for the withdrawal of British troops from abroad was dropped from the 'Where We Stand' column in *Socialist Worker*. Today the SWP still justifies this position by taking cowardly refuge behind an 'internationalism' which, at that time, required 'having the same position as comrades in Ireland'.

When the IRA split over the recognition of the imperialist parliaments, and the need to organise armed struggle to end Partition and drive British imperialism out of Ireland, most of the British left took the Official IRA's side, and began to systematically attack the Provisional IRA. So the IMG studiously informed us

'The Official Republican Movement...is...the most important socialist organisation in Ireland today. We think that in the long term, they will play a much greater role in liberating Ireland than will the Provisionals'. (*Red Mole* 23 March 1971)

And *Socialist Worker* tells us that although

'...at present the militancy of many young workers takes the form of support for the "provisional" wing of the republican movement...this wing...is hostile to revolutionary socialism. The Provisionals are unable to lead the militants out of the blind alley of brave but fruitless confrontations with the troops...They are unable to provide a political lead'. (*Socialist Worker* 15 August 1970)

They, of course, had criticisms of the 'Officials' and argued that although they had taken a good line in 'denouncing Catholic bigotry', their 'Dublin leadership has not been willing to follow through the logic of its position'. Well, no doubt *Socialist Worker* was relieved when later it did. However, it went much further than the British left did and completely drew out the reactionary logic of seeing a progressive side to British imperialism. The Official IRA was soon to give up the armed struggle, and became Sinn Féin, The Workers Party, a pro-imperialist, pro-Stormont rump of reactionaries.

Finally, when the Official IRA bombed the Aldershot barracks after Bloody Sunday, the British left showed where it really stood. IRA bombing campaigns were soon to unite them all. So the *Morning Star*:

'The real fight against those responsible for the Derry shootings will be hindered not helped by bombings such as that carried out at Aldershot yesterday...They make more difficult the forging of unity between the working people of Britain and...Northern Ireland.' (23 February 1972)

The *Socialist Worker* agreed:

'The official wing of the IRA...has done nothing by this act [Aldershot] to weaken the Tory government...A policy of individual terrorism has nothing in common with a socialist aim of building a mass working-class movement'. (26 February 1972).

And finally the Socialist Labour League, forerunner of the Workers Revolutionary Party:

'WE CONDEMN THE BOMBINGS...until now the Official IRA has opposed the reactionary, indiscriminate violence of the Provisionals...the terror of the oppressor cannot be overcome by the terror of the oppressed...' (*Workers Press* 24 February 1972)

The one exception, at this time, to the outright condemnation of the bombings was the IMG. Arguing correctly that 'all violence in Ireland stems from imperialist oppression', Bob Purdie then said:

'The oppressed minority, through its armed vanguard, the IRA, will be forced to reply to oppression in equally, if not more violent terms...Aldershot was a legitimate military target despite the tragedy of civilian deaths.' (*Red Mole* 13 March 1971)

This position was not maintained. As the revolutionary war continued, the IMG was soon to join the rest of the left in condemning the Provisional IRA.

Building an Irish Solidarity movement in Britain was never an important political concern of the British left. The ones that did come into existence in the period 1969-72 reflected the essentially middle class character of the British socialist left with its ambivalent attitude to British imperialism.

The Irish Solidarity Campaign was founded on 9/10

October 1970. The main organisations involved were the IMG, IS (SWP), and Clan na hEireann (an Official IRA support group). It called for self-determination for the Irish people; the release of all political prisoners; the immediate withdrawal of troops; it supported the right of the Irish people to arm and organise self-defence; and opposed those fostering religious sectarianism in Ireland and preventing working class unity. The latter two of these positions were implicit attacks on the Provisional IRA, not surprisingly since the 'Officials' were working in the organisation. The mythology has it that the Provisionals supported offensive action against British imperialism while the Officials only defensive, although Aldershot took some explaining. The Provisionals were often described as sectarian Catholic nationalists by the British left. This was nothing but an Official IRA slander.

The ISC represented very little and did even less. A dispute between the IMG and IS(SWP) dominated its existence. The IMG, in those days called for 'Victory to the IRA' whereas the IS(SWP) argued for 'unconditional but not uncritical support for the IRA'. When internment came and the left had to respond in some practical way, we soon saw what this division was all about.

The IS(SWP) established the Labour Committee Against Internment (LCAI). Its first act was to betray the internees in order to build an alliance with the Labour Party 'left'. It called for the release or trial of the internees. The signatories to the LCAI included Frank Allaun, Sydney Bidwell (who recently told Tariq Ali to go back to Pakistan), Eric Heffer, Arthur Latham, Joan Lester, Michael Meacher (who voted for the PTA in March 1977), and Jock Stallard. This open abandonment of the internees, who wanted no trials conducted by British imperialism but only their freedom, was defended by the IS(SWP) using an argument that has become a cover for the left's reactionary positions ever since.

'The LCAI was set up at the request of socialists in Northern Ireland, who appealed to the British labour movement to arouse the maximum possible protest at conditions there...'

Socialist Worker and the International Socialists fully support the LCAI and we are willing to participate in the campaign regardless of the difference we may have with some signatories on many issues.'

So hiding behind Irish socialists, IS(SWP) set up a campaign with a fundamentally reactionary demand for release or trial of the internees. This not only implies the possibility of a 'fair trial' under imperialist rule, but also allowed them to construct one of their many rotten alliances with those so-called 'progressive' imperialist forces – the British Labour Party 'left'.

The LCAI achieved nothing and was pushed into oblivion by the Anti-Internment League (AIL) which called for the release of all internees. Given its principled position, the AIL was able to organise significant support among the Irish community in Britain for this demand. However, following Bloody Sunday, and given its relative success, the British ruling class decided to smash the campaign in Britain.

The Saturday following Bloody Sunday, 5 February 1972, a massive demonstration of 20,000 people called by the AIL marched from Cricklewood to Whitehall. The march was composed mainly of Irish workers, students and the middle class socialist left. There was little support from the British working class. In Whitehall, the police reneged on an agreement to allow thirteen coffins to be carried into Downing Street. A Union Jack was burned. Immediately, a flying wedge of police smashed into the march and mounted police attacked it from both ends. Chaos ensued. Fighting with the police broke out along Whitehall, into Trafalgar Square and as far as Piccadilly. Over 100 marchers were injured and 130 arrested. The next morning, three of the organisers were arrested in dawn raids.

Faced with the need to confront the state in order to oppose British rule in Ireland, the British middle class socialist left retreated. Never again was there a march of such a size.

Over the next ten years, and especially after the IRA military campaign in Britain began, that retreat turned into headlong flight. Rather than confront British imperialism, the British middle class socialist left has attacked the Republican Movement, denounced the armed struggle and betrayed every later attempt to build a mass anti-imperialist movement in Britain.

David Reed
December 1981
To be continued

The previous night's killings are normally left on roads on the outskirts of San Salvador. They're left along recognised places. There's one road that leads out to the north of San Salvador where there's a number of impromptu rubbish tips outside small villages or slums. Relatives will go and identify the bodies there. A lot don't necessarily identify them - they'll merely confirm their fears and then go away. Because to identify to the authorities that you have a relative or a friend who has been killed is inviting that you get killed yourself.

The refugees

We went to two of the refugee camps in San Salvador itself. One of them is in the grounds of a catholic seminary. We met a group of mainly older people there, who told us how many of their family had been killed by the armed forces. There was one person who probably wasn't more than about 50 who said that 9 of his immediate family had been shot. Most of them had 2 or 3 people who'd been shot - husbands, sons or daughters. They were all people who came from the battle zone, that's to say areas where they had the misfortune to be close to or living in a village which the army was trying to take or occupy. Or perhaps a village which was known to be sympathetic to the guerillas and therefore they were simply being slaughtered as a matter of reprisal, a matter of intimidation.

The other place we went to wasn't so much a camp. There were probably about 200 to 300 people crammed into a church in one of the popular areas of San Salvador. They live in complete terror. The building has been shot up several times by the National Guard. We could see the machine-gun bullet holes in the walls. There we met a young boy of about 14 who was paralysed from the waist down after being shot by the army. He was known to be a messenger for the guerillas from an area where the peasants gave them a lot of support. So he and his family had come into this place. They were so terrified that none of them ever left the building. They lived in a sort of ground floor basement which only had light from a fairly narrow courtyard at one end. So most of them lived in semi-darkness. And of course it's damp. The young children were suffering a great deal from chest infections - bronchitis, tuberculosis.

The worst place we went to was called El Plajon, literally, the big beach. But it's not a beach at all. It's an area about half an hour's drive to the north of San Salvador where there's a volcanic lava flow that extends down into a large plain. It's an area of about several acres and it is crossed by a main road. It's a peculiar looking place - a jumble of black rock that is completely infertile, nothing is grown on it. And there you get a lot of bodies dumped. When you drive through, the first thing you notice is this terrible smell, a real stench of rotting flesh which is what it is. And, if you have the guts or the business to find out what causes it, you discover there's a whole lot of bones. There's skulls, arm bones, leg bones, rib cages and everything scattered about just on the road side. You don't actually have to walk any distance off the road. There's a great flock of vultures that hang about, and, if you look further you'll find bits of clothing and even people's documentation scattered about. If you walk to where the vultures are thickest then you'll be sure to find a fairly recent body.

The morning we went out to this place we had been told that there were several bodies there and what we found in fact was about half a dozen bodies. Some of them had been there probably for several days because, what was left of them was fairly dried out, and they had been fairly well eaten by vultures. There was one body that was clearly fresh from that night and this had been pretty busily eaten by the vultures - a young man who had been dumped completely naked. The bodies

Repression in El Salvador



eyewitness account

The following are extracts from an account by a journalist who recently visited El Salvador, exclusively given to FRFI.

The murders

The day that we arrived in San Salvador there was a page 2 photograph in a local newspaper of several bodies in a poor person's house. They were in fact several members of a family of six, all of whom had been killed in a core working class area of San Salvador. The Guardia de la Hacienda, a sort of armed customs police, had just burst in at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning and shot the whole family. That included a couple of young kids, one of 10 and the other of 12. Another example was one morning there was a report that seven young men had been found shot on the outskirts of a village. They were young men from that village. No names were given. But presumably it was a reprisal raid against a village where it was known that a number of people had gone to join the guerillas or that they were anti-government in general. This sort of thing is absolutely daily.

that had survived more intact were ones that had been dumped clothed. There is a Salvadorean business man, one of those accused of the murder of Rudolfo Viera (head of the Agrarian Reform Institute) and the two American agricultural advisers earlier this year. This businessman, called Krist, who is well connected with the land-owning oligarchy and the military, owns a meat factory in the outskirts of San Salvador. It has been noted that a number of bodies have been found lying near to the factory which have been beheaded or mutilated or chopped up in a remarkably precise and neat fashion. This suggests that it has been done in the meat factory. And it has been said that some parts of these dead people have found their way into the dog food, if not the pork pies or whatever they make in this factory. It's not so much a matter of whether or not that's true, but people relate the story as being perfectly possible. It's not just some ghoulish joke, it is considered perfectly possible and quite likely that this bloke's meat factory is used to kill people at least, if not to do anything else with them.

US Imperialism and the FMLN

The US embassy in San Salvador was apparently built on the model of the US embassy in Saigon and it certainly looks like it. It has sandbagged emplacements on the roofs with the US marines strolling

about on the roof top and peering at you with binoculars. There's a fifteen foot high concrete wall surrounding the embassy compound with turnstile security gates - exactly like the ones around the central part of Belfast - and lot of marines with sub-machine guns at the ready inside. Private gun-toting security personnel, presumably recruited from right-wing groups or from individuals from the Salvadorean armed forces are also in abundance. The reason for this is quite clear when you realise that the embassy has been attacked by RPG rockets 3 times this year.

Off the record the American ambassador, whom we were interviewing, said that when the Americans started a big airlift early this year during and after the FMLN's January offensive, the army had virtually run out of ammunition. In his opinion it had been a matter of days, or at most 2 or 3 weeks and the army would have simply not been able to hold their own. That is a very clear indication of the importance of the American effort in El Salvador. If they hadn't come in at that time there is no doubt that the regime would have fallen fairly soon. Even if it hadn't been because of outright military victories throughout the country by the forces of the left, it would have been certain that the army would have just run out of hardware to pursue the war. We saw evidence of this when we went to the headquarters of the National Guard in San Salvador which is mainly a training camp.

They put on this display for us, a sort of ceremonial marching, but the supposedly crack drill squad that we were given to film turned out to be a bunch of 7 day recruits. Practically all the other people in training, a number of several hundred, were out in the countryside fighting the guerillas. That shows how stretched their resources are.

The Americans had sent the Green Berets in - I think they were in there last year and also during part of this year - to try and form a crack army unit. This was partly to further their aims of building up the army as a separate, more manipulable armed force in opposition to the National Guard but also they obviously wanted this unit to be effective. However the Green Berets apparently left in disgust earlier this summer. They decided there was no way they could train this sort of crack unit because the level of corruption and therefore the incompetence of the Salvadorean armed forces is just too high. Obviously they could've trained the soldiery if they'd had time but they couldn't overcome this problem of the command.

In the interview the ambassador tried not to say anything that was too incriminating, but off the record afterwards when he was challenged about the level of the killings he said 'Well sure there are killings. You have to expect that because the state judiciary cannot work properly. But', he said, 'it has to be done. These people have to be shot - it's just unfortunate that the wrong people get shot sometimes'. Which, if you're thinking of 30,000 people getting shot, he's saying that most of those should have got shot. That is clearly the private American view. There's obviously an attempt being made by the Americans to make it more efficient and to wage the war more effectively against the guerillas, but there's no attempt to stop the killings.

Imperialist puppet Duarte

Duarte, the President of El Salvador and one of the few civilian members of the Junta, is very much a figure head - the man the Americans want to keep in there because he provides a civilian and sort of reformist gloss to the government. However, he wields no power. An example of this was when he went to the United States. This was certainly headline news in the American and European press because he spoke at the United Nations, had interviews with Reagan and very much put the position that the Americans should carry on support. Well, during the first 3 or 4 days of his trip, while he was making international headlines, there was practically no mention of his visit in the Salvadorean press. The press is owned by the oligarchy and the military and they think so little of Duarte that they didn't even bother to report what he was saying and doing in the States. After about 3 or 4 days of this, apparently, the Americans got really fed up with the Salvadorean press for not reporting their man. So this special supplement appeared, a specially printed thing. Obviously it was paid for. It appeared in all the daily papers and contained the record of his speeches, pictures of him with Reagan and of him addressing the UN. Otherwise it would not have been reported.

The resistance continues

While we were away in Guatemala, a couple of days before we came back to finish filming in El Salvador, the guerillas did launch a heavy attack on a police station on the outskirts of San Salvador. They launched it from the foothills of a couple of large extinct volcanoes that are literally 2 miles from the centre of town. It wouldn't occur to you that there are actually armed forces of the left in those hills that you drive past. But they are that numerous and that close to the centre of San Salvador. It's an indication of their strength.

LATIN AMERICA IN BRIEF

Haiti

● Regime of horror

Installed and propped up by US imperialism, the Duvalier regime in Haiti has turned the country into hell on earth. 80% of the people are unemployed, 40% are hungry and 85% illiterate. Half the children are dead by four years and average life expectancy is 40 years. For every high school graduate there are 35 prisoners and 189 soldiers. Malaria, tuberculosis, typhoid and tetanus are common.

But this hell provides US multinationals with a lucrative trade: the blood of Haitians is rich in antibodies and is sought after by wealthy American companies. Last month 5 tons of Haitian blood is shipped to Don Chemicals, Arnout Pharmaceuticals and Laboratories Cutter, with sales to the Haitian Ministry of the Interior.

Haitians fleeing this laboratory have been denied refuge in the US. The authorities have built concentration camps in Florida and US-held Puerto Rico. Refugees are imprisoned behind barbed fences, in tents and concrete bunkers, watched over by armed guards. Recently US and Bahamian coast guards sank the refugees' boats, drove them back and a new camp has been opened in the state of New York where temperatures are below freezing. Black and progressive organisations in the USA and Puerto Rico, disgusted at this naked reality of US imperialism, are threatening to tear down the fences that hold the refugees of Haiti in place.

Trevor Rayne

Cuba

● Imperialist Hands Off Cuba

US imperialism is now making preparations for military aggression against the anti-imperialist bastion of America - revolutionary Cuba. The US State Department has contingency plans for the immediate blockade of the island and for possible attacks on military and economic targets. Preparations for war against Cuba were strengthened when the Pentagon announced that US forces in the Caribbean, the Gulf of Mexico and Central America were being brought under a single command. In response to the imperialist threat, millions of Cubans have taken to the streets to dedicate themselves to resist imperialist aggression. Speaking for the Cuban people, Fidel Castro declared:

'We serve notice on the imperialists that the Cuban people will live with the revolution or every man and woman will die with it.'

And Granma, in an editorial statement, claimed:

'We shall resist this overbearing, arrogant and fascist policy at any cost. We have proven more than once that the empire does not instil in us the slightest fear or respect.'

Nicaragua

● USA prepares for war

In a public statement, Alexander Haig, Secretary of State refused to rule out the possibility of a naval blockade and bombardment of Nicaragua. Following Haig's remarks, a US Senator, Mike Barnes said 'If I were a Nicaraguan I would be building my bomb shelter'. The Nicaraguan people are joining their revolutionary militias in their thousands in readiness for war against US imperialism. A revolutionary official said:

'If we were exporting cocaine to the United States like Bolivia or Colombia, presidents like Argentina we would have the support of the Reagan Administration.'

But because Nicaragua strives to improve the conditions of its people and to free the capitalists the right to rob and oppress workers and peasants, US imperialism prepares war against it.

HANDS OFF IRELAND!

Catholic Church aids British imperialism

The Roman Catholic Church in the North of Ireland has recently launched its most sustained and vicious attack on the IRA for several years. Over the last few weeks Cardinal Tomas O Fiaich, Dr Edward Daly (Bishop of Derry), Father Denis Faul of Dungannon and Father Anthony Mulvey of Strabane have all issued major public statements condemning the IRA for continuing its armed struggle against British oppression and even calling on the nationalist people to inform on IRA volunteers. The reason for this concerted attack by the Catholic Church on the IRA is not hard to find. The Church – like its middle class political counterparts in the SDLP – is desperately worried at the massive upsurge of support for the armed struggle arising out of the heroic self-sacrifice of the hunger strikers. This is why the Church did all in its power to undermine the hunger strike and why it is now seeking to counteract its effects on the consciousness of the nationalist people.

This latest attack by the Church, however, should not come as any surprise, for the Church has always sought to weaken and undermine the struggle of the Irish people against British imperialism. While British and loyalist forces attack the nationalist working class from the outside, the role of the Catholic Church has always been to try to weaken nationalist resistance to such attacks from the inside. Hence in the last few weeks, at precisely the same time as the nationalist working class has come under a sustained onslaught from British and loyalist forces (both 'official' and 'unofficial'), the leaders of the Catholic Church in the Six Counties have repeatedly called on the IRA to lay down its arms and abandon its struggle against British imperialism.

Such calls have brought a swift response from the Republican Movement. A statement from Derry Provisional Sinn Féin pointed to the basic reason for the Catholic Church's opposition to the IRA:

'The Church recognises the fact that it is not merely an ally of the ruling class but it is in essence an integral part of the British establishment in Ireland, and as such must do all in its power to contain the natural development of the revolutionary struggle. It has chosen as its task to blunt and weaken the people in the struggle for freedom'.

The statement continued:

'It is a political fact that the Catholic Church in Ireland has always been a bastion of reaction. Unlike the Church in other lands – for example, Latin American priests are with the people and the freedom fighters – the Church in Ireland has been since the ending of the penal days a formidable agent of British imperialism. Each and every step of the liberation struggle has been condemned. The progressive interests of the Irish people have been denounced'.

The statement concluded emphatically:

'The Republican Movement is not interested in minor changes within the capitalist system. We will create a new socialist society based on national freedom, social justice and individual liberty. We are opposed to exploitation, poverty, and sectarianism, which are the "benefits" of British rule and loyalist intransigence. The Republican Movement stands for progress. The British establishment stands for reaction. The choice is clear for the people of Ireland'.

Unfortunately for the Catholic Church – and all other agents of British imperialism in Ireland – there is no doubt what that choice will be: the war against British rule in Ireland will continue until final victory.

Irish Correspondent

PATRICK HILL

The Birmingham Six – John Walker, Patrick Hill, Gerald Hunter, Noel McKenny, William Power and Hugh Callaghan – were arrested immediately after the Birmingham bombings on 21 November 1974. They were tortured into making 'confessions'. Prison doctor Harwood testified that the six arrived at Winson Green prison 'black, blue, battered and bleeding'. Winson Green screws, in order to cover up the marks of police brutality, then beat all six.

Despite the evidence of Harwood that the six had been beaten and the evidence of Dr Yallop that the forensic tests had been incorrectly conducted, all six were convicted and jailed for life.

Ever since they were arrested in November 1974, the Birmingham Six have fought to expose the frame-up organised against them by the police and the courts.

In 1976 Winson Green screws were tried and acquitted of assaulting the six, part of the defence being that the six had been beaten by the police. On 30 January 1980 Lord Denning prevented the six from bringing actions for assault against the police on the grounds that if the actions were successful the police would be exposed as torturers and perjurers. Finally on 19 November 1981 Lord Diplock (creator of the non-jury courts in the Six Counties), on behalf of the House of

TM

James Larkin

STRUMPET CITY CENSORED

The TV series Strumpet City is based on the novel of the same name by James Plunkett. It is the story of the 1913 Dublin lock-out when the Irish workers launched their heroic struggle to defend the revolutionary Irish Transport and General Workers Union. Despite the fact that both the novel and the TV series are fiction – albeit based on real historical events – the British ruling class is so terrified by the thought of British workers learning the truth about Ireland that Strumpet City has been subjected to blatant censorship.

In London it is being shown from 11.45pm to 12.45am. In other regions it is being shown in the afternoon! No substantial review has appeared in any of the bourgeois papers. The left press too has largely ignored it. Yet not only is the production, acting and script of this series of the highest standard but also its subject matter is of the greatest interest to British workers.

The TV series portrays the courage and solidarity of the Irish workers banding

together in defence of their lives and rights. It shows how the Dublin lock-out was a revolt of the poor against their oppressors. The machinations of the employers and the treacherous role of the Catholic priesthood is well exposed. In Chandlers Court, the tenement where the main characters live, the inhuman and barbarous conditions imposed on the workers by the Irish employers in alliance with British imperialism are exposed. As the series progresses the workers' hatred for the oppressor and loyalty to the ITGWU and Jim Larkin grows with each new instance of oppression whether it be a brutal baton charge on striking workers or Barney Mulhall's losing his legs in an accident caused by the employers' callous disregard for safety standards. The treacherous betrayal of the Dublin workers by the British trade union leadership is underlined in the scene where James Sexton, Dockers Union, arrives in Dublin to sell out Larkin and the Irish workers.

Strumpet City should be seen and discussed by all workers whatever obstacles the ruling class puts in the way. The novel too is an excellent account of the Dublin workers' struggle.

TM

FitzGerald – servant of imperialism – the story continues

In an interview shown on Ulster Television on 3 December Garret FitzGerald spelled out once again his determination to defeat the IRA and made it clearer than ever that he was prepared to use whatever measures were necessary to accomplish this task.

In particular, he not only repeated his proposal for all-Ireland courts to deal more effectively with Republican 'terrorists' captured in both parts of Ireland but also suggested that such 'joint courts' should be accompanied by 'joint interrogation', allowing the RUC to interrogate Republicans captured in the 26 Counties where their 'crimes' were alleged to have been committed in the Six Counties. He then gave a strong hint that he was contemplating the introduction of even more drastic repressive measures when he added: 'I will not close my mind to anything that will be effective [ie in defeating the IRA]'. FitzGerald also took the opportunity in the interview to re-emphasise that his proposals for joint 'security measures' had nothing whatever to do with a united Ireland. On the contrary, FitzGerald once again made it quite clear that his government's policy was simply to develop closer co-operation between the two states in order to combat more effectively the one serious enemy of partition – the Republican Movement.

CPGB – CPI Lie

James Stewart, Deputy General Secretary of the tiny 'Communist' Party of Ireland, was given a CPGB platform in Islington to back up their reactionary campaign against the liberation movement in Ireland.

In his speech the growth of the UDA and the present campaign of the neo fascist 'third force' were blamed on the IRA! In order to paint the IRA as pawns of imperialism. Stewart repeated the lie that 'elements in the southern government' had paid money to 'a section of the republican movement to conduct the struggle in the north and nowhere else'. Challenged by FRFI supporters at the meeting he declared that the hunger strike had created the present loyalist reaction, that the IRA had made it impossible to 'carry through' political status by 'narrowing' the campaign, and that the electors of Bobby Sands were against physical force! This reactionary drivel followed his lying claim that the CPI was the first to demand political status for the H Block prisoners! When asked why his party, with not a single prisoner in the H Blocks, could deny the real role of the IRA when Pravda, Fidel Castro and other communists declared the prisoners to be liberation fighters, Stewart refused to answer the question.

Stewart's presence in Islington revealed the CPI's readiness to be of service to the CPGB's anti-Irish and anti-Republican campaign. This is not the first time the CPGB has used so-called 'communists' from Ireland to attack the republican movement. Communists however are not deceived.

MORRIGAN



●Dublin Embassy 20

As the sham trial of the Embassy proceeds, the non jury Special Criminal Court operates according to its prescribed function of sentencing tribunals. Patrick Kehoe is the latest frame up victim in a catalogue of frame ups and the first 20 working class H-Block activists to serve a term of imprisonment – 3 years – in connection with the garda police riot at the British Embassy on 18 July.

The only evidence brought by the prosecution during the trial consisted of a photograph of the riot, in which the defendants could be identified, and the verbal statements of gardai. Typically the court was entirely satisfied with the evidence and pronounced a guilty verdict.

The outcome of this 'test' trial augurs poorly for the chances of the other defendants and must be seen as pouring cold water on the efforts of the National H-Block/Armagh Committee to fight a successful legal battle in defence of the Embassy 20.

●Loyalist Attacks in 26 Counties

The upward spiral of loyalist sectarian attacks against the working class nationalist community has spread to the 26 Counties.

On 25 November, the Dublin offices of Phoblacht/Republican News were shot at and two men were injured. In claiming responsibility the UDA said Sinn Féin President Ruairi O'Bradaigh was the intended target.

In a further Dublin attack on 4 December a prominent IRSP figure and anti-H-Block activist Harry Flynn was gunned down as he drank in a Marlborough Street pub. His condition is serious.

In their reaction to the Dublin assassination bids, Free State gardai sought to cover up for the perpetrators and excuse their own indifference on the matter by attributing the incidents to a fictitious republican 'feud'. The bourgeois media in reporting incidents peddled the garda fabrication with meticulous precision while middle class politicians' and opportunists' throats were paralysed by a seizure of laryngitis.

●Garda harassment

Garda harassment of Republican political activists in the 26 Counties continues unabated. The latest episode concerns the arrests of 4 Sinn Féin members, 2 from the north and 2 border local councillors, on trumped up charges of sedition and IRA membership respectively.

On 28 November, John Joe McGirl, a 40 year old man and chairperson of Leixlip County Council together with John Lynagh a member of Monaghan Urban District Council and frequent target of garda harassment were brought before a non-jury Special Criminal Court where they were charged with membership of an illegal organisation, a charge carrying a maximum penalty of 7 years imprisonment.

A few weeks previously Gearoid Carthaigh and Kenneth Kennedy of Leixlip were arrested and charged – the first time with incitement in the course of a speech – with support of the H-Block protest, the latter with possessing a 'seditious poster'.

The arrests of all four were of an unabashed political nature, the belief being that they could weaken the Republican base in the masses. However, as the history of struggle verifies, the Irish revolution has an abundance of talent ready to take the place of its murdered and jailed comrades. What the ruling class views as its strength is in fact symptomatic of a great weakness.

Morrigan



● **PC sets fire to own station**
A policeman who had been so keen on joining the force that he did special exercises to increase his height was jailed for 18 months at Devizes Crown Court for setting fire to his own police station.

PC William Wilson, 22, developed this hare-brained scheme as a means of reducing his work load. 'I wanted to get rid of all the paper work and start again' he said, and so he burnt down the police station. It is unfortunate for PC Wilson that science has not yet developed a 'special exercise' capable of increasing a policeman's brain to normal size.

● **Home Office to test strobe**
The Home Office is to test a device which earlier this year it said was 'not the sort of thing we use in England'. The strobe gun is one of a long line of 'non-lethal' weapons used for riot control which include CS gas and rubber and plastic bullets. This nasty little device emits light at frequencies which cause dizziness, nausea, and in some cases epilepsy. It is designed to immobilise people for up to 30 minutes while police can move in and make arrests. How many people will be killed by this latest 'non-lethal' weapon as a result of swallowing their tongues whilst having a fit, remains to be seen.

● **Just pulled in**
The use of the PTA by the police as an arbitrary weapon of terror against the Irish community was shown again when five Irishmen were arrested in a London pub under the act and held for 16 hours interrogation (see FRFI 14). John McEntee, journalist with the Irish Sunday Press, reported that when he phoned Scotland Yard press bureau he was told by a spokesman that they would be released soon, and "'They're not the ones we want. We just pulled them in'" he quipped with a chuckle.

● **SUS**
You can't teach an old dog new tricks. The sus law was abolished by the new Criminal Attempts Act in October this year. This Act gives the police equally wide powers to harass black youth on the streets, but either nobody told the Metropolitan police or they haven't worked out how to use it yet - for they are still bringing charges under sus! On 30 November a 19 year old student was prosecuted by police before West London Magistrates under the sus law. His case is being taken to the High Court by his solicitor who is challenging the bringing of a prosecution under a law that no longer exists.

● **South African tout**
British police are getting a bad reputation for lack of job security they offer to touts. South African Bruce Adams is being deported after helping British police 'in a number of drug trials'. He claims he was paid £60 a week every Friday at a meeting with a member of Lewisham CID. At the end of the last trial he was given £450 as reward money.

Mr Adams says that he left South Africa after helping security police with 'minor surveillance work' when they tried to involve him in arranging 'accidents'. Perhaps he didn't realise when he moved to Britain that he would be working for the same boss.

NOTES & COMMENTS

■ Civil liberties and Labour MPs

The November/December 1981 issue of the NCCL magazine *Rights* provides further evidence of the reactionary character of the Labour Party. In a survey of MPs' voting records on 13 issues concerning democratic rights, the NCCL reveals that the 'democratic' and 'freedom-loving' Labour Party supported the NCCL on an average of five times. The Labour Party scored lower than the Liberal Party, whose average was six! Only nine Labour MPs supported the NCCL on ten or more issues. Significant is that Mr Wedgwood Benn - cult hero of the middle class left - was not one of them. The survey also records all MPs who supported the NCCL on at least eight issues - Mr Benn is not amongst these either!

Only 25 MPs opposed the Contempt of Court Bill, which further restricts the rights to report court proceedings. When the Emergency Provisions Act was renewed in December 1980, only 21 MPs opposed it. Mr Benn was not one of them. Again only 25 MPs opposed the Imprisonment (Temporary Provisions) Act in November 1980.

These cold and precise facts are a sharp antidote to the windy rhetoric of Benn and his defenders who never cease proclaiming their love for democratic rights. □

■ France: immigrant workers on strike

For the past two months immigrant workers in France have been going on strike demanding a contract from their employers in order to allow them to apply for a work and residence permit. Those who do not ask for this permit, remain illegal immigrants at constant risk of being caught. Those who apply for it and are refused will simply be deported in the New Year, under the new 'socialist' laws.

Workers employed to distribute leaflets have been the first to take organised action. Several of their employers refused to provide a contract when asked. For years they have enjoyed all the advantages of employing illegal labour: low wages, no rights, and instant dismissal if required. But confronted by strikes and occupations, one by one the employers had to give in. By the end of November 100 workers had received contracts in this way.

That was only the first step. The immigrants must also apply to the State for a work permit. It will not be given to anyone who arrived 'illegally' within the past year. So as not to be divided and weakened, the workers have put forward the demand that immigrants be unconditionally given the permit. They have formed an active coordinating committee to help extend the struggle to other places of work including hotel staff, and the hostels. They also aim to break through the media's wall of silence, and gain solidarity from French workers. The strike continues to spread to other firms, as workers gain hope and confidence from the success of their brothers and sisters.

The two main trade unions stand as obstacles in their path. The 'Communist' Party and its Union, the CGT, opposed the occupations and self-defence, and have stayed well out of the struggle. The CFDT (the 'Socialist' union) are playing a more dangerous game. They go along with the struggle to obtain contracts, but try to prevent any extension of the fight. At all costs they must prevent the self-organisation of immigrant workers on such a scale that they could force the government to give permits to all. Indeed they openly oppose this demand. They succeeded in breaking the solidarity of one group of workers by promising special treatment if they went back to work. The manoeuvres succeeded that time, but the government failed to fulfil the promises made! To immigrant workers, the Trade Union is simply showing its true face: in full support of the state and the exploiters. As the struggle continues the battle-lines become clearly defined, and the false friends show their allegiance. □

Julia Marston

■ Tebbit's Union Rules - K.O.?

Norman Tebbit, Thatcher's new 'hard-man' Employment Minister has outlined plans for a major legal assault on trade unions and the right to strike.

First, closed shop agreements will be subject to 'reviews' every 3 or 5 years. This allows the bosses to insist on continual ballots with an 85% majority being required to keep a closed shop.

Second, Tebbit's Bill will offer huge financial incentives to scabs by promising minimum compensation of £14,000 to scabs refused reinstatement if sacked for refusing to join a union - the union paying of course.

Third, in a blatant attempt to find a legal means of bankrupting unions, the new Bill will enable bosses to sue unions for damages up to £¼ million when an official strike takes place.

The Bill's most dangerous provisions relate to the right to strike. Following on from 'soft-man' Jim Prior's invention of the 'secondary' dispute Tebbit's new Bill makes illegal all industrial action not 'wholly or mainly' connected with terms and conditions of employment inside the particular firm. The capitalist class are determined to label strikes and other industrial action as 'political' in order to remove any legal protection to union members. In particular Tebbit's Bill arms the ruling class of imperialist Britain against a real danger. The Bill outlaws all industrial action relating to matters outside this country. This makes totally illegal, for example, industrial action here in support of black workers struggling to unionise in South Africa, or indeed support action against any of the British imperialist companies who exploit workers throughout the world.

Tebbit's Labour Law Bill is seen only as the next stage by the capitalist class. Clearly they will not be content until they destroy every legal right for workers to organise in their own defence and in defence of fellow workers and the oppressed throughout the world. □

■ CPGB Congress

From 14 to 17 November the CPGB gathered for its two-yearly Congress. In the face of collapsing *Morning Star* sales; plummeting membership figures and acute internal crisis, the CPGB continued on its long-established opportunist path. It called for 'non-racist' nationality and immigration laws. It called for police accountability and democratisation. It called for support for the reactionary racist bourgeois Labour Party. The list is endless.

The anti-Soviet and anti-Irish campaign of the CPGB was strengthened. On Ireland, Congress recorded its 'unreserved' condemnation 'of the military campaign of the Provisional IRA' whilst calling on British imperialism 'to create the political, social and economic conditions to bring about the unification of Ireland'. The Irish presumably are not capable of doing this for themselves! On the Soviet Union the CPGB, no doubt as a 'fraternal party of the world communist movement', condemned Soviet armed assistance to the Afghan revolution, waffled about 'limitation on democracy' and worried about Soviet 'interference' in Poland. Some fraternity! The CPGB's opposition to the IRA and its opposition to the Soviet role in Afghanistan are the expression of its consistent pro-imperialist opportunism.

Unfortunately the opposition in the CPGB has yet to understand this. Tom Durkin led the opposition on Afghanistan declaring that 'appealing to the imperialists is like asking the tiger to become vegetarian'. Yet at the RCG/CPGB debate this year he supported exactly this line on Ireland: appealing to bloodthirsty British imperialism to become the guardian of democratic rights. If the opposition in the CPGB is to become a Communist opposition it must realise that the CPGB's anti-Soviet stance is one and the same as its anti-Irish stance. □

Terry Marlowe

■ NCP Congress

The New Communist Party's Third Congress took place in London on 28/29 November. The report of this gathering in the *New Worker* (4 December) revealed that censorship and distortion are among the many political traditions which the NCP has retained from its days in the CPGB.

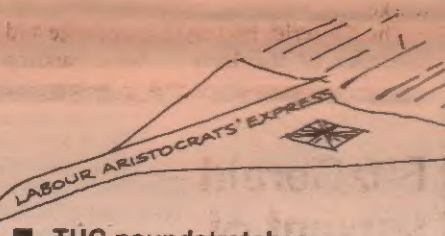
On Ireland we are told that 'a deeply debated resolution'... 'proved to be amongst the leading features of the Congress', but we are not told what was actually debated or decided. No explanation of the fact that the NCP, whilst claiming to support the Republican Movement, prevented its members fighting for political status during the hunger strike. On racism we are told that the draft resolution was so bad that it was replaced during the Congress but not told what position was taken. Does the NCP recognise the revolutionary significance of the Summer Risings? Who knows? Certainly not the readers of the *New Worker*.

It is a public fact that the NCP is riven with division. Yet its 'full and frank' reporting simply hands out abuse refusing to allow its readers to judge the issues:

'A tiny group of delegates argued that the problem was to find supermen - 'advanced workers' they called them in a parody of Leninism - but Congress resolutely rejected their elitist view.'

What this opposition argued remains a mystery to all. It is clear that the NCP cannot become a Communist party - it is no more than the CPGB dressed in false 'pro-Soviet' clothing. For the real way to defend the Soviet Union is to unite with those forces fighting to destroy British imperialism right here in its heartland. □

Terry Marlowe



■ TUC poundstretchers

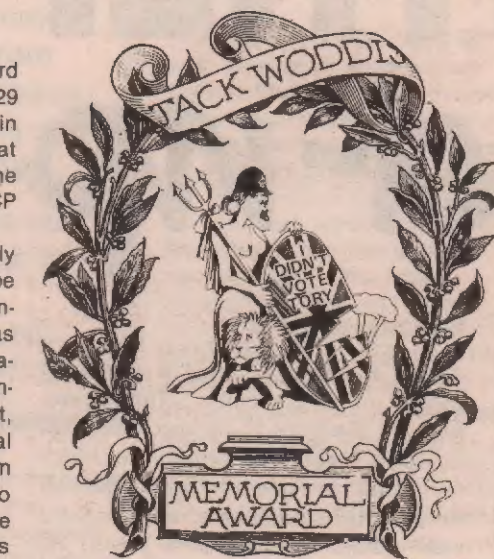
Len Murray (TUC) and Tom Jackson (UCW) caused a stir when they landed in London having flown back from New York in Concorde at a premium of £1,563. These two lackeys paid more for this one trip across the Atlantic than a single person on supplementary benefit receives in a whole year! No wonder the baggage handlers at Heathrow hurled taunts and jeers at Murray and Jackson!

Of course this working class anger did not penetrate the narrow selfish labour aristocrat skulls of Murray and Jackson. 'I felt very proud it was a British aircraft. It was certainly a lot better than the Club class on the way out.' No doubt the single parent mother queuing for hours in some filthy social security office for a pittance to keep herself and her children alive is expected to share Tom Jackson's 'pride'.

Whilst on board Murray and Jackson treated themselves to 'caviare, Fillet of Dover Sole, Stuffed Quail and champagne. No doubt the workers of Leyland so recently betrayed by the trade union leadership will be glad to know that their union dues helped to finance this junket.

Who can seriously expect such people to defend the working class? On the contrary the Murrays and Jacksons will fight any threat to their privileges whether from the Irish people, black and white working class youth, the unemployed or trade unionists trying to defend their living standards.

Why the rush? Len Murray had to be in Newcastle-upon-Tyne to give a cynical send-off to the TUC's Jobs Express taking unemployed youth for a ride. 'Len was going to be very busy over the weekend and needed to get a good night's sleep', explained Jackson. Well no one expects the likes of Murray to lose sleep over unemployed youth, do they? □



■ Tariq Ali tries to join Labour

Tariq Ali, once the terror of Fleet Street editors, has resigned from the IMG and rushed to join the Labour Party where he believes 'The most dynamic development for decades... the emergence of a new Labour Left' is taking place. But the Labour Party refuses to have him? Why? - we ask. His politics are completely compatible with the reformist and hypocritical left wing of the Labour Party. He has said so himself. Unfortunately some of his dynamic co-thinkers aren't keen to welcome him. Sid Bidwell, left winger, said:

'Whatever he is, there is plenty of scope for his revolutionary talents in Pakistan.'

That's what comes of wanting to join a 'left-wing' that has over the years conspired in every infamous racist act of the British state - immigration controls, anti-Irish laws, the oppression of people all over the world.

Tariq Ali has stated that he will keep on trying - but as a consolation prize in the mean time FRFI has awarded him the Happy New Year Jack Woddiss Award for National Chauvinist Hypocrisy. Perhaps he could use it to back-up his next application to join.

■ Poverty in Britain

'Along with the constantly diminishing number of the magnates of capital... grows the mass of misery, oppression, slavery, degradation, exploitation...' (Karl Marx)

Despite all the arguments of all the professors hired by capital to prove Marx wrong, imperialist reality proves him right. Even in the heartland of imperialism poverty is now growing at an unprecedented rate. Since 1977, the number of people living below the Government's official poverty line has leapt from 2 to 5 million and the number living around or below that level is now a quarter of the British population. The number of houses declared unfit for human habitation (and a 'fit' house can lack bath, toilet and hot water) has risen by 50% during the last year. Nearly 5 million people are forced to exist on means tested supplementary benefits and more are joining them every day. Over the last year council tenants' costs have risen by 1/3 because of rent and rate rises.

Howe's recent mini-budget has tightened the screw. Council house rents will rise by a further £130 per year. The real value of pensions paid to 9 million retired people has been cut. 2½ million people on supplementary benefits will also be worse off. An unemployed man with a wife and two children will now be nearly £250 a year worse off in real terms. Prescription charges have been raised and soon charges will be introduced for those health services at present free. Everywhere, every 'benefit', every service, every rebate that made life half-way bearable for Britain's poor, is being cut.

'...but with this too grows the revolt of the working class, a class always increasing in numbers, and disciplined, united, organised by the very mechanism of the process of capitalist production itself.' (Marx)

Steve Palmer

RCG-FRFI MONTHLY Round-up



Dundee Demonstration 28 November

Then on 28 November a contingent Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! supporters from Manchester and Birmingham marched on a demonstration organised by Iran Solidarity Manchester. The 500 strong demonstration went through the centre of Manchester chanting slogans like Down with Khomeini! Long Live Revolution!

Mike Duffield - No Case to Answer

On Wednesday 2 December the Glasgow Irish Freedom Action Committee and supporters of FRFI held a large picket of Glasgow District Court demanding dropping of charges against Mike Duffield. Mike was arrested on the Glasgow May Day march for shouting 'Victory to the Hunger Strikers! Political Strike Now!' - a breach of the peace according to the Glasgow police!!

The Procurator Fiscal called for adjournment of the trial because he did not have enough evidence. He had given police witness permission to go on holiday and then had the nerve to use the absence of this witness as part of his excuse for lack of evidence. The Sheriff obliged the Procurator Fiscal and granted a further three months adjournment. The trial will take place on April 27 1982, almost a year from the original arrest. The eight defendants, (one of whom travelled from Holland, losing his job as a result), simply turned away. Clearly afraid of this prosecution court collusion would be seen by the public, the public gallery closed and the GIFAC supporters denied access to the 'Trial'.

The Mike Duffield Defence Campaign is demanding that the charge, which carries a possible 6 month jail sentence and a £1 fine, be dropped. Send letters, demanding the dropping of the charge to, The Procurator Fiscal, 298 Clyde Street, Glasgow and copies to GIFAC, Box 15, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh.

Manchester Martyrs Saluted

For the first time in Manchester since 1974, a demonstration to commemorate the Manchester Martyrs - 3 Irish patriots hanged by the British - took place on Sunday 29 November. This was the first chance since the end of the hunger strike for anti-imperialists in North West England to demonstrate their solidarity with the Irish national liberation struggle. Nearly 400 people marched, led by Sinn Fein banners and the St Johns pipe band from Glasgow. *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* had contingents present from Manchester, Leeds, Bradford, Liverpool, Birmingham and Scotland. Supporters of the PMOI were also present with banners declaring solidarity with the Irish struggle. Other banners present were from the Glasgow Irish Freedom Action Committee, Nottingham Irish Solidarity Group and SPTAC.

Manchester Street Meeting

The FRFI street meeting held on 5 December in support of the Bradford 12 was particularly successful in spite of the bad weather. People doing their shopping at Longsight Market are by now used to FRFI street meetings on the Bradford 12 and some came up to enquire about the latest information regarding their trial.

Manchester Rally

A rally was held by FRFI at Longsight Library on 10 December. The speaker from the Bradford 12 Defence Campaign traced the history of conspiracy laws which were introduced to crush Irish Republican freedom fighters and which are now being used against the risen black youth. He showed why only a massive, militant and principled campaign will secure victory for the Bradford 12.

The speaker from the Leeds 3 campaign explained how a victory was won for all socialists with the recent victory in the courts.

North London Demonstration

On 19 December, over 100 supporters of Irish freedom marched through Archway and Holloway. The march, led by the North London Irish Solidarity Committee, was supported by FRFI, Sinn Fein, Iranian anti-imperialist organisations - Peykar, OIPFG, MSS and Komola as well as RCL and RCP.

The march received a warm response from local people - indeed the sellers of FRFI sold 120 papers. At the rally a handful of reactionary thugs turned up with a banner, chanting UDA slogans, but went away. At the rally all organisations on the march spoke. Speakers included Ben Hill,

brother of Irish POW Paul Hill, who outlined the degrading conditions that Irish prisoners face. A PSF speaker told of her ex-husband's arrest yesterday under the PTA and the smashing up of her house by the anti-terrorist squad. Terry Marlowe speaking for FRFI condemned those who attack the so-called lack of democracy in the socialist countries whilst ignoring the presence of British troops in Ireland and pledged the RCG's continuing support for the Irish liberation struggle.

Bradford 12

FRFI has continued to hold street meetings in support of the Bradford 12 in London and the North West. These told hundreds of people about the Bradford 12 case and built support for the 12 December demonstration to which FRFI contingents travelled from all over Britain.

Dundee - Police Attack Democratic Rights Again

No doubt angry at the success of the defence campaign Dundee police displayed blatant prejudice with the arrest of a band steward on the 28 November demonstration. He was attacked by one of a handful of fascists who had followed the march jeering and blowing whistles with

open police toleration and approval. He was arrested and charged but has pleaded not guilty. The Dundee Committee is mounting another campaign to expose the loyalist Dundee police and have the charges dropped.

South London Public Meeting

The South London Irish Solidarity Committee (SLISC) held its first public meeting on 10 December in Brixton. Its aim was to build support for the North London march on 19 December. Ben Hill, brother of Republican POW Paul Hill who is in Wormwood Scrubs, spoke for the SLISC. Brought up in the Falls Road, he used his own experience of British rule in Ireland to urge support for the national liberation struggle and for Republican prisoners in Ireland and in Britain.

Iran solidarity

On 13 November, despite police harassment, over 100 people picketed the Iranian consulate in Manchester. The two hour picket organised by Iran Solidarity Manchester demanded the release of over 5000 political prisoners in Iran and condemned Khomeini's regime which murders and tortures to survive. At one point a pro-Khomeini thug assaulted a PMOI supporter who was handing out leaflets.

EVENTS

2 - 9 JANUARY

MANCHESTER
Victory to the Irish People!
Longsight Market
11am to 12 noon
Saturday 2 January

UNITY IN ACTION
Public Meeting
African National Congress (South Africa) 70th Anniversary
8 January 1982
Meeting at Central Hall Westminster at 7pm
Speakers: Comrade Alfred Nzo, General Secretary ANC & guests from SWAPO, PLO and Anti-Apartheid Movement, Socialist International and others.

MANCHESTER
Public Rally
Defend the Khan Family!
Defend the Bradford 12
Longsight Market, Saturday 9 January at 12 noon

17 - 23 JANUARY

MANCHESTER
street meeting
Defend the Khan Family!
Defend the Bradford 12
11am onwards
Saturday 16 January

CARDIFF
Public Meeting
Remember Bloody Sunday!
Victory to the Irish People!
Monday 18 January at 7.30pm
Wales Empire Pool, Committee Room A, Cardiff

NORTH LONDON IRISH SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN Public Meeting

Thursday 21 January at 7.30pm
John Barnes Library, Camden Road, Holloway, N7.

IRAN SOLIDARITY DEMONSTRATION
Protest against repression in Iran!

Stop Khomeini terrorism in Britain
Saturday 23 January
(further details to be announced)

MANCHESTER
Remember Bloody Sunday!
Victory to the Irish People!
Longsight Market 11am to 12 noon Saturday 23 January

SOUTH LONDON
Street Meeting
Remember Bloody Sunday!
Saturday 23 January 11am
outside Prince of Wales, opposite Lambeth Town Hall

MANCHESTER
Demonstration
Defend the Khan Family from 'Removal'
Saturday 23 January
Look out for details!

24 - 30 JANUARY

SOUTH LONDON
Public Meeting
Remember Bloody Sunday!
Victory to the Irish People!
Wednesday 27 January, 7.30pm
Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton
Admission 30p

DUNDEE
Public Meeting
Democracy for the Rich,
Repression for the Poor!
Thursday 28 January at 7.30pm
Wishart Centre, Dundee

EDINBURGH DEMONSTRATION
Saturday 30 January 1982
AGAINST US INTERVENTION IN CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN
Assemble: Waverly Bridge, Edinburgh
Organised by Latin American Solidarity

COMING SOON

BLOODY SUNDAY COMMEMORATION DEMONSTRATION
Sunday 31 January 1982
Coventry City Centre
Called by Sinn Fein

LIVERPOOL
Public Meeting
Victory to the Irish People
Friday 12 February
Further details from your local FRFI seller

LONDON
Public Rally
Democracy for the Rich
Repression for the Poor!
All London Rally in defence of Democratic Rights organised by Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!
Friday 5 February at 7.30pm
Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1
Nearest tube Holborn
Speakers: Sinn Fein (Britain) Alastair Logan, Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!
Other speakers invited
Admission: 75p (50p in advance)

EDINBURGH
Public Meeting
Fight for Peace!
Fight Imperialism!
Defend the Socialist Countries!
Wednesday 17 February at 7.30pm
Edinburgh Trades Council, Picardy Place, Edinburgh

MANCHESTER
Demonstration
Victory to the Irish People!
Saturday 20 February
Assemble 12.30pm at Moss Side, outside Birley High School, Chichester Road
Called by North West Irish Solidarity Committee

SOUTH LONDON
Demonstration
called by South London Irish Solidarity Campaign
Saturday 27 February
Assemble 1.30pm outside Irene House, Balham High Road near Balham Tube
Victory to the Irish People!
Troops Out Now!

BRADFORD
Public Meeting
Smash Apartheid! Victory to the ANC!
Tuesday 2 March at 7.30pm
Queens Hall, Morley Street, Bradford

NORTH LONDON
Public Meeting
Victory to the ANC!
Smash Apartheid!
Thursday 11 March, 7.30pm
John Barnes Library, Camden Road, Holloway, N7
Called to mobilise for the National AAM demonstration

NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION
Isolate Apartheid South Africa!
Sanctions Now!
14 March 1982

DEADLINE FOR ADVERTS FOR FRFI 16: 19.1.82

SOLIDARITY COMMITTEES

SOUTH LONDON
South London Irish Solidarity Committee meeting
Wednesday 13 January, 7.30pm, Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton

NORTH LONDON
North London Irish Solidarity Committee meeting
Thursday 7 January, 7.30pm, Mitford Centre, Mitford Road, off Tollington Way, London N19

The Glasgow Irish Freedom Action Committee
meets weekly to organise work in Glasgow in support of the struggle for Irish liberation
For details write to GIFAC, Box 15, First of May Bookshop 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh

FOR SALE/HIRE

SACTU 1982 CALENDAR
£2
Each month is illustrated and has information of dates and activities of the South African Workers struggle
SPECIAL OFFER 10 for £18
Obtainable from South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) 38 Graham Street London W1 8JX
Money with orders please
SUPPORT THE SOUTH AFRICAN LIBERATION STRUGGLE

VIDEO FILM
1 hour-long video
Ireland's Hunger Strike
available from Glasgow Irish Freedom Action Committee
Write for details to GIFAC, Box 15 First of May Bookshop, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh

STREET MEETINGS

LEEDS
Every Saturday 11am on Corner of Reginald Terrace and Chapeltown Road, Leeds 7

NORTH LONDON
Archway Tube 2.00pm Saturday 2, 9, 16 January
Kilburn Square
Saturday 23 January

FRFI SUPPORTER GROUPS

■ **LIVERPOOL** meets every other Friday 7.30pm. Next meeting 8 January, Stanley House, Upper Parliament Street, Liverpool.
■ **LEEDS** meets every other Tuesday at 7.30pm. Next meeting 5 January, Leeds Trades Club, Saville Mount, Chapeltown.
■ **DUNDEE** meets fortnightly on Sunday. Next meeting 10 January. Details from sellers or write to RCG Box 10, First of May Bookshop, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh.
■ **S LONDON** meets fortnightly. Next meeting 5 January. For details write to London FRFI, BM Box 4835, London WC3X.
■ **N LONDON** meets fortnightly on Tuesdays. Next meetings Tuesday 5 January and Tuesday 19 January at 7.30pm Mitford Centre, Mitford Road, London N19.
■ **EDINBURGH** meets fortnightly on Sundays, 7.30pm at First of May Bookshop, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh. Next meetings 3, 17, 31 January.
■ **ABERDEEN** Anyone interested should contact FRFI c/o Boomtown Books, 151 Street, Aberdeen.
■ **BRADFORD** meets every second Thursday at 7.30pm. Next meetings Thursday 7 January and Thursday 21 January. Conference Room (upstairs), Queens Hall, Morley Street, Bradford.
■ **CARDIFF** meets fortnightly on Monday. Next meeting Monday 4 January, 7.30pm, Wales Empire Pool, Committee Room A, Cardiff.
■ **MANCHESTER** Fortnightly on Sunday. Next meeting 10 January 2pm. See FRFI sellers for details.
■ **BIRMINGHAM** Next meeting 10 January 7pm. Labour Party HQ, 14 Bristol Street.
■ **GLASGOW** Group meets regularly. For details contact: FRFI, Box 40, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh.

LETTERS

Do not despair of NCP!

Defend socialism in Poland

Following the suggestion by Edinburgh FRFI Support Group to picket British banks with interests in Poland, the letter below was sent to the New Communist Party.

Dear Comrades,
The anti-Soviet campaign being waged by the imperialists is using the crisis in Poland as one of its main focuses. Prostituting the words 'freedom' and 'democracy', the imperialists are supporting and encouraging the most reactionary, anti-socialist elements in Polish society. Their aim is clear – to undermine socialism in Poland and set back the progress of socialism world-wide. In this campaign, the imperialists have been joined by the British Labour Party and the petit bourgeois socialist organisations like SWP, IMG and CP.

US and British imperialism are playing a leading role in this campaign. The time is overdue for socialists in Britain to oppose the activities of the British ruling class and rally to the defence of socialism in Poland. In particular, it is vital to show people where the cause of Poland's economic problems really lies – in the stranglehold of the imperialists, particularly the imperialist banks, in the Polish economy. Poland's debts now stand at \$25bn and the great proportion of this is owed to western banks. The imperialists are using this stranglehold to gain a political foothold in Poland as a means to counter-revolution. It is vital to expose this, to build opposition to the imperialist onslaught and to show that there are people willing to stand up to this virulent anti-communist campaign. We therefore propose that on a set day in January, pickets be held on those banks most heavily involved in the Polish economy. These pickets to take place in as many major cities in Britain as possible and be given maximum publicity. Their theme should be 'Imperialist Hands Off Poland', 'Cancel Poland's Debts' and 'Defend Socialism in Poland'. We know that the NCP supports imperialism in Poland and therefore are proposing that the NCP and we jointly call and organise these pickets. This would strengthen their act and influence.

On the dates we would propose are Friday 8 January or Friday 15 January at 12.30 – 2.00pm. Since 'Lloyds' and 'Barclays' are the main banks to which Poland owes debts, we propose to concentrate on these banks. We would propose picketing a large central bank of either Lloyds or Barclays in following towns: London, Manchester and Glasgow. Besides, we would invite anti-imperialist organisations to join pickets and would inform the Polish, Cuban and other embassies.

Please let us know quickly whether you agree to jointly calling pickets as obviously the more publicity gets out the better. List the NCP and ourselves on certain issues we see reason why this should stand in the way of cooperation to oppose imperialist designs on Poland. Sincerely,
John Williams
(Edinburgh Communist Group)

Dear Comrades,
Thank you for FRFI 15. I have pleasure in enclosing a cheque for £2.00 to renew my subscription, plus £1.00 cash fund donation. As usual I find most of the latest issue of FRFI of a high standard, but must tell you I very much regret the article entitled 'NCP scabs on hunger strikers' on page 7. It seems a pity that you must attack the only truly revolutionary group apart from the RCG in England in this way.

I would be interested to hear the NCP's side of the argument, but even if all you claim of the NCP's attitude to the RCG is true, I think you would do better to try and influence them by positive criticism rather than by sectarian calls to their members to desert the party. Why do you not try and educate their leadership? Write to them and explain you are not trotskysts, that you defend the socialist countries against trotskyst and petit bourgeois attacks, and that you would value working with them through not only the South London Hunger Strike Action Committee for example, but also in any Ireland work they might organise.

You may not get a positive reaction in the short-term, but I believe the RCG had a considerable influence over the development of the NCP (not directly of course but through arguing cogently at political meetings etc) and believe the two groups will continue to influence each other. I remember when I was in the CPGB in Sheffield that much of what RCG members said at open meetings was reluctantly agreed with by people who are now variously disillusioned and out of politics, in the NCP, and still in the CPGB. Even the NCP theoretical journal seems to bear a remarkable resemblance in layout to 'Revolutionary Communist'.

Do not despair of the NCP. You and they are the only two groups in England still supporting the armed Irish national liberation struggle after the recent bombings over here.

How about taking up Edinburgh FRFI Group's idea and inviting the NCP to join you in picketing British Banks in a day of Solidarity with Socialist Poland? That should appeal to them. Even if they refuse, you could ask them what actions they intend undertaking that you could support. The NCP's positions are not so far away from yours (as is the case with all the other so-called left groups) that you cannot influence them, by talking to them.

Long Live the NCP!
Long Live the RCG!
Fraternally yours
JL
Chester

Editorial note: We do not judge an organisation by its words alone. The NCP did print articles supporting the hunger strikers and the Republican Movement, but its leadership actively prevented any effort to translate fine words into practical deeds. It withdrew from the South London Hunger Strike Action Committee and was rarely seen on the numerous events organised in support of the hunger strikers. The most dangerous form of opportunism is that which utters words in support of the anti-imperialist struggle in Ireland while at the same time opposing practical work to build a movement in support of this struggle. It is the NCP leadership which behaved in a

disgracefully sectarian manner by forbidding its members to work in the SLHSAC on the sham grounds of 'opposition to trotskysm'. The NCP, it should be noted is quite happy to work with trotskysts in the CND. It put its own narrow ideological shibboleths before the urgent need to build a movement to win political status for the Irish hunger strikers. The RCG was therefore entirely correct in appealing to genuine communists in the NCP to leave that organisation.

Comrade JL will note, from the letter to the NCP printed on this page, that we are taking up the suggestion from Edinburgh FRFI supporters group to picket British banks exploiting Poland. Unlike the NCP on the hunger strike, we are prepared to work with the NCP to oppose imperialist aggression not only against Ireland, but against the socialist countries too.

Unfair attack on CND

Dear Editor,
Your attack on CND was most unjustified and unfair on myself and many thousands of CND members and supporters who also are socialists.

CND is solely for nuclear disarmament and nothing else. There are plenty of other organisations for Ireland, El Salvador etc of whom myself and many other CND members support.

The CND movement collapsed in the sixties through infiltration of extremists using the CND platform for their own cause.

Unsigned Editorial note: We do not attack individual followers of the CND many of whom do indeed honestly desire world peace. Our attack is against 'The leaders, organisers and propagandists of the CND and their supporters in the SWP, IMG and CPGB...'. The main point of our article in FRFI 14 was that nuclear disarmament and peace is possible only with the destruction of imperialism and that the threat of nuclear war can only be ended by 'the ending of imperialist aggression and war against the oppressed nations and socialist countries'. The CND poses as a peace movement but does not fight imperialism. Indeed its leaders, such as EP Thompson, defend it, whilst attacking the Republican Movement in Ireland. What is the use of 'plenty of other organisations for Ireland...' (even if they did exist) when hundreds of thousands march on CND demonstrations, but only hundreds on pro-Irish ones. Nuclear war is still only a threat, however awesome, the oppression and war against the Irish is actually taking place now. Yet the CND leaders say nothing about the murder of Irish people and the SWP, IMG et al pour all their efforts into the CND and none into a movement to support the Irish.

Prison letter

These are extracts from a letter sent us by a prisoner in an English jail.

...the forces of evil that patrol our once great city, have decided to put operation clean-up into force. By this I mean their sole intention is to remove all the people who

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they (the filth force) think a danger to them. They believe that removing people like me, ie into prison, they will be able to control any more outbreaks of rioting. This as we all know will not succeed, as Bobby Sands MP once said 'You can't kill a Dream and you cannot lock it up in a prison cell'. The fight will go on until the people of Liverpool 8 are free from Oxford's storm troopers...

...revolutionaries don't expect and should not expect anything from these people. What we revolutionaries should expect is incarceration. Ann Harries and all the other brothers and sisters who have and who are about to be sent to these dirty rotting cesspits must be strong. We all have the same dream, the same goal. In war there are deaths, wounds and so forth. The people of Vietnam didn't give up, and they were dying in their thousands, so why should we give up... We should take heart, we cannot and will not lose. What you've seen on 4/5 July was an awakening of social conscience. The people don't want any more Jimmy Kellys, no more Davy Moores. We want the filth to recognise the rights of the people, if they don't we shall make them...

The bloody government we all live under, will have to rethink... she's gonna have to curb the filth, or the people will wipe them out. As of yet we're only defending, the attack has yet to come. We all know the filth are tooling up against us... We are ready for their water tanks and their rubber bullets.

Wolf in sheep's clothing

Dear FRFI,
I see the state as a beast, a wolf in sheep's clothing.

...The state tries to give us the impression that they are for the people, when really they are looking after themselves, their profits... They use the police, their army, to keep us down in our place. The state distributes its papers, its lies, to keep the truth from us. FRFI keeps us informed here in Stockwell, informed as to the truth in Britain, Ireland, Africa and elsewhere where people are suffering racist oppression. It was good to see the attack on Ian S mention in your paper (FRFI 14)...

The state is the terrorist, yet when we or anyone else fight back we are called terrorists. This state keeps down the Irish people... and calls them terrorists. When we black people fight back they are going to call us terrorists. It hasn't stopped the Irish people fighting back and it won't stop us fighting back against our oppressors the British state...

Joe
Stockwell, South London

Internationalism

Dear Comrade,

The thing which I like about FRFI was of course its internationalist policies. It seems to cover a large part of the world, pin pointing out all their problems, whereas a lot of socialist and communist papers devote more cover space to just national news, which is good in one instance, but I feel gives a narrow outlook to the British, because they then can't see how their movement is connected with what is happening elsewhere in the world. That's why the left is so disjointed, and reformist; because they are isolated. They want to change things here first, and then go out to help other countries, not understanding, that the movements are all connected, when one succeeds, they all succeed, maybe at different levels, but the tide is high. Even the left have the arrogant islandic ideas, that a Socialist England first will change the world to become socialist later much as she did previously with her empire.

English people need to understand that a country, for example like El Salvador, is not a small country miles away, but next to you; that the Salvadorean people are not just Salvadoreans, but our brothers. For this fight against imperialism is not their fight, it is our fight, they are losing their sons for our benefit, to weaken imperialism.

Yours fraternally
OI
Wakefield

Communist Tradition

Dear FRFI,

FRFI 13 was as good as ever. The series 'The Communist Tradition on Ireland' is really very good. It is a great piece on Irish history. I think it should be put in book form, perhaps it is already...

WR
Dundalk
(Ed) A book is planned

Australian anti-imperialism

From Sinn Fein – Australia
Dear Comrade,

Firstly, I would like you to send FRFI to the above address for 12 months by air...

We are at present issuing a fortnightly bulletin and we would very much appreciate your permission to quote from FRFI in it. Of course, we would give due acknowledgement to the source!

Many thanks for the copies of FRFI which you sent me. Most impressive. I'll certainly see about articles from this end. As we have been carrying out a big programme designed to make the organisation a real force, that is in Australia, we had no time to look to other things out now that the programme is nearly finalised (with real success, I'm glad to say) we must look around to letting our friends and comrades overseas know a bit more about Irish republican and socialist activities in Australia.

It is good to learn that you are having success with FRFI. We here also suffer a lot from the lies of the imperialist press and your publication will certainly help to expose those lies, in Britain and overseas.

In solidarity
JM
Victoria, Australia

Congratulations

Dear Comrades,

I have enclosed a £2.00 postal order for a subscription to Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! Could you start it from the November issue.

I congratulate you for your excellent paper. It is great that you come out firmly in support for Ireland's fight for freedom, unlike some so-called socialists. Yours fraternally

John
Wembley

Suspicious confirmed

Dear FRFI,
I enclose £2.00 for a six month subscription to Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!

The articles in FRFI have confirmed my suspicions that groups such as the SWP and IMG are not genuinely revolutionary, but I had not realised they were so hypocritical about support for the Provisionals and INLA or armed revolutionaries in Europe.

Fraternally
JL
Sutton, Surrey

Parasites visit Wales

Comrades,
On November 4 this year the people of Wales were unfortunate to be visited by two of Britain's biggest parasites.

On the first day a young woman ignored the police and plainclothed SAS gunmen, and sprayed white paint over the royal car.

On the second day 200 Welsh nationalists greeted the parasites with smoke flares and stink bombs. One demonstrator was assaulted by a loyalist thug and instead of arresting the loyalist, the demonstrator was arrested.

Before and during the visit two bombs were planted. One in Pontypridd, and another in Cardiff. Responsibility was claimed by the Workers Army of the Welsh Republic. The British press screamed hysterically about protecting the parasites from Irish 'terrorists' and Welsh 'fanatics'. Anti-Irish and anti-Welsh racism was clearly seen. Cymru Sosialaidd
CP
Caerffili

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HANDS OFF IRELAND

IRA against British Army

On the morning of 24 November, in a series of morning raids in Belfast's Oldpark and Ardoyne districts, the British army arrested over 20 Republican members and supporters. Many of them now face charges in connection with a number of IRA military operations and the press has announced that more will be arrested and charged. These arrests were a direct result of information given to the security forces by Christopher Black – a Republican turned traitor. Black who was arrested on 21 November betrayed his comrades and has since been bundled off to England along with the rest of his family.

The British press, not unexpectedly, made a meal of this news. They hoped that 'Supergrass' – as they had dubbed Black – would lead to a serious weakening of the IRA's military effectiveness. The vain hope of bourgeois propagandists that a few informers are capable of turning the tide against an armed anti-imperialist movement born of mass working class resistance has already shattered.

On the very day of the army raids a 15 strong IRA active service unit mounted a large scale gun attack on the Middletown barracks in South Armagh, raking it with M60 machine gun fire. Two days later a permanent army checkpoint on the Fermanagh/Cavan border was subjected to a brilliantly organised car bomb ambush. The IRA unit involved, after successfully sealing off the checkpoint to civilians, let

loose a driverless car primed with explosives. The British soldiers were too startled to run and when the car hit the checkpoint and exploded two were seriously injured. Then on 29 November an RUC patrol was ambushed outside Unity flats in Belfast killing an RUC man, while in Armagh the following Tuesday another RUC patrol was subject to a gun and grenade attack.

These and other operations, are sufficient answers to the idle hopes of imperialist journalists. The armed struggle in Ireland has surmounted many a more serious obstacle and returned to harass and terrify British imperialism. It will continue to do so until every British soldier is either buried or withdrawn from Ireland.

Eddie Abrahams

NASTY SHOCK

The Manchester-based clothing firm of Carrington Viyella recently received a nasty shock when it closed down its shirt factory in Derry. In the usual cynical manner of British capitalists the company simply told the 320 workers that they were redundant and called in a haulage firm to remove the manufacturing equipment from the factory.

At this point, however, the Derry Brigade of the Provisional IRA stepped in. A statement issued by the IRA in Derry warned the haulage firm that action would be taken to stop any attempt to remove the machinery from the factory. At the same time Derry Provisional Sinn Féin also issued a statement attacking trade unionists and politicians in the city who were 'negotiating' over the closure of the factory for ignoring the effect that redundancy would have on those being thrown out of work. The statement pointed out: 'Many of these workers were the main breadwinners in their families. The fact that they have been made redundant means that in many cases their families will be living below the poverty line'. The statement accordingly called for the £250,000 which the machinery in the factory is worth to be given to self-help groups in the local community. At the time of writing the machinery remains in the factory pending a settlement satisfactory to the nationalist working class community in Derry.



Glasgow Demonstration

GLASGOW

Demonstration

On Saturday 12 December Glasgow working class youth once again demonstrated their uncompromising stand in support of the Irish struggle for freedom. The demonstration started in the Roystonhill district of Glasgow with a tremendous chant of 'Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now!'

At the rally in Blackhill a speaker from the GIFAC called on all present to help build and organise a mass movement in Glasgow and the West of Scotland. In winding up the rally a speaker from the RCG took time to mention the hypocritical bleatings of the capitalists as regards the prima donna 'hunger strike' of the latest Soviet dissidents while ten Irish freedom fighters were slowly murdered for sixty days and more on hunger strike. The marchers will continue to demonstrate and continue to expose such obscene hypocrisy. A message of support, from Amsterdam, was met with enthusiastic applause: 'The H-Block Armagh Committee, Netherlands, send greetings and fully supports your march. Victory to the Irish People!'

JM



THIRD FORCE

After all the claims and counter-claims surrounding the appearance of Ian Paisley's 'Third Force' it has become all too clear over the past few weeks that this 'new' force is simply the latest in a long line of 'unofficial' loyalist forces whose sole aim is to intimidate the nationalist community into submission. Ian Paisley has indeed compared the relationship between himself and the Third Force to that between Edward Carson and the UVF in 1920 when Carson provided the political leadership and the UVF the armed force to ensure the establishment of the Six Counties state. As in 1920 the appearance of such an 'unofficial' loyalist force can be traced to doubts among loyalists as to the effectiveness of the 'official' British and loyalist forces in suppressing Republican resistance and to a vague (but entirely groundless) suspicion that the British government may not be fully committed to maintaining loyalist privileges and the Six County state.

The attitude of the British government towards such 'unofficial' forces has in fact always been one of tacit encouragement in practice combined with public statements of disapproval – in just the same way as, for example, the regime in El Salvador and the United States government which supports it publicly condemn the activities of right-wing death squads while in practice allowing and encouraging such activities to continue. This has been the attitude of the British government towards the UVF and the UDA and so it has proved in relation to the Third Force. Illegal road checkpoints and harassment of nationalist people, particularly in rural areas, by the Third Force have been widely tolerated by the

'official' forces, while on Ian Paisley's Day of Action RUC and UDR men chatted with masked loyalist thugs as the latter set up road-blocks and later, the 'official' forces again looked on benevolently as the Third Force marched in military formation through Newtownards. Similar parades by the Third Force in other towns have likewise gone entirely unhindered by the 'official' forces.

Jim Prior's condemnation of 'private armies' and his promise that alleged links between the Third Force and the UDR and RUC would be investigated were therefore strictly for public (and particularly international) consumption. The reality of the situation was betrayed when Prior

called on members of the Third Force to join the RUC and UDR – an open acknowledgement that these 'official' loyalist forces are composed of exactly the same kind of loyalist thugs as those who constitute the Third Force. Prior's statement indeed confirms that the British government's attitude towards such 'unofficial' forces has not changed in the slightest since the foundation of the Six County state in 1920 when entire units of the UVF were recruited into the Ulster Special Constabulary – the forerunner of the UDR.

In these circumstances the call made by the SDLP for an inquiry into the Third Force can be clearly seen as no more than a pathetic attempt to cover up for the British state. As a statement issued by Derry Provisional Sinn Féin pointed out:

'What have enquiries ever accomplished, save to divert people's attention from the real issue and hide the true culprits? We had the enquiry into the death of Sammy Devanny, with its notorious "conspiracy of silence" as the RUC sheltered its murderers. We had the Widgery Report enquiring into the murders of Bloody Sunday – worse than no enquiry at all. It slandered innocent, protected the guilty, and brought promotion and decoration to the murderers'.

The statement concluded:

'An enquiry will change nothing, neither will it tell us anything. Do we need to be told that the Third Force is armed Loyalism on the march? Do we need to be told it exists with the blessing of the First and Second Forces, the British Army and the RUC and UDR? Do we need to be told the Third Force activity is legal, while peace protests by Nationalists are put down with plastic bullets, summonses and beatings? No one needs to be told any of this. Jim Prior's open encouragement for Third Force members to join the RUC and UDR underlined the blatant sectarianism of all three. This was a stark affirmation of the relations between the British Government and armed Loyalism. Can anyone, especially Michael Canavan [the SDLP spokesman who had called for an enquiry] defend the logic of asking any branch of the British establishment here to investigate Loyalism, for whom it provides the very life blood?'

For the nationalist working class the appearance of the Third Force has merely underlined once again the necessity to continue the struggle against that which breeds and sustains all such forces in North of Ireland – the British imperial state.

Irish Correspondent

SCOTLAND

EDINBURGH

Sewer from Scottish television

On Guy Fawkes night, 5 November, Scottish Television (STV) held one of their so called 'people's meetings' in St Ninians Church, Edinburgh.

Two Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! supporters were present, one successfully put STV 'on the spot' as it were. What he demanded to know was:

'Why did STV go on about Major Pringle's dog which luckily missed death by an IRA bomb, so much, when they failed to mention about 8 and 9 year old boys and girls who were being maimed and killed by plastic bullets?'

The answer we received from the head of STV News was as follows:

'The reasons we go on about Major Pringle's dog is because we think that a Major, and I'm sure many will agree, is far more important than any Irish children, as are the British government more important than the IRA, INLA or whatever you call them'.

So now you know STV are biased. You can be sure that whatever you read and hear is not true but one-sided and twisted.

GH

DUNDEE

Dundee Demonstration

The Dundee Irish Republican Solidarity Committee organised its second successful demonstration on Saturday 28 November. The 100 strong demonstration marched through the town chanting 'Victory to the Irish People!' It was joined by contingents from Glasgow, Edinburgh and Fife as well as the new Bobby Sands Memorial band which arrived from Wishaw to give an enthusiastic performance.

Defence Campaign Wins

Police charges against a number of Dundee Irish Republican Solidarity Committee supporters have been dropped. This follows a vigorous campaign which gained support from local unions and the Trades Council. Workers at the Timex factory and many local working people signed a petition and donated to the campaign. MPs were written to and the local council heard a committee spokesman.